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A CREED FOR COLLEGE MEN

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A CREED FOR COLLEGE MEN

BY
HUGH ANDERSON MORAN, M.A.
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DEDICATION

To the constant companion of my life, who has shared all my labors and entered into all my thoughts and aspirations,—my wife, this book is affectionately dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

Prout's Neck, Scarboro, Maine,
August 3rd, 1924.

FOREWORD

Every age has its attitudes and its conventions. We are all too apt to point the finger of scorn at the Victorian age and to thank the Lord that we are not as these Victorians were. Our younger generation rejoices in a freedom and a naturalness which are refreshing. Yet though the old false-front in both architecture and coiffure may have gone out of style, we have substituted our own special forms of pretense. I refer particularly to the air of indifference and nonchalance affected by our young people to-day towards serious subjects in general and more especially towards the great discussions of religion, life, and philosophy which have occupied the minds of thinking men in the past. That air of indifference is very apparent but it is entirely unreal. It is the style.

Never have there been so many students, the cry for learning goes up as never before from every land. Yet it is these very students above all who affect a surface indifference toward learning. The more deep and fundamental the subject, the greater the affected indifference. But underneath the surface reserve, shall we call it, there is a hunger for truth, for knowledge and for experience, the like of which the world has rarely seen. This is true the world over; it is certainly true of American students. They are not content to take anything for granted. They want to trace everything back

to its source, to dig through every statement down to its foundation. Nor do I refer in this only to the studious students, those who seek honors in the class room; I refer equally to those intellectually apparently the most casual, to the football players and other types of athletes, to the lounge lizards and the leather necks, and the regular fellows. Enter unannounced any fraternity house or dormitory in any college or university in America on almost any night during the term and walk quietly through the halls and what will you find going on? Listening with attentive ears, you will be sure to find a group foregathered in some room discussing the fundamental questions of life, religion, or morality. Such a discussion is called a "Bull Session." It may start at the dinner table and be continued about the library fire. It may start in some man's room. It is apt to spread like the flame from a lighted match in dry grass, until the whole house is engaged. Not infrequently it is continued until three or four o'clock in the morning.

Such is the American undergraduate to-day,—if you track him to his lair and catch him with his pipe in his mouth and his coat off,—that outer coat of indifference with which he protects himself from the assaults of dogmatism, traditionalism, and piosity. He seeks truth. He wants facts. Unfortunately he has not always been given facts and truth, so he turns to his own kind who speak the same language and think in the same terms as himself. Together they try to reason out a philosophy of life based upon and in harmony with the new knowledge which they gain daily in the class room, the laboratory, and in their own extra-curriculum experience.

This knowledge comes to them dissociated, from many different sources. Seldom does the college provide in the curriculum any course or facilities for the mental, moral, and spiritual synthesis of knowledge and experience, which is the very essence of education. Sometimes an understanding member of the faculty "spends his heart" for them, to use an apt Chinese phrase, and greatly is such a man beloved. But for the most part the students are left to work out their own synthesis and to provide their own philosophy of life. Hence the "Bull Session."

But the bull session as ordinarily operated is an ineffectual method of promoting systematic thought. There is no leader, no plan, and generally no definite objective. One question provokes another. Neither is answered. The participants gain some advantage by expressing their ideas, and by exchanging those ideas with their fellows, but they wander into every intellectual byway and lane that presents itself, and soon the original question is lost sight of altogether.

There is a better way. It is sometimes possible to call in an older person, who has experience and sympathy and has been over the ground before. In his presence the questions which have been perplexing the minds of the group can be brought up and listed in some sort of logical order. They can then be discussed informally and at the same time intensively under the guidance but not the dictation of the leader. It is not his to lecture nor to dogmatize. Should he do so he is bound to fail. He is not expected to answer the questions which arise, even granting that he might feel himself capable of doing so. It is his task to lead and to guide,—to act as an impartial chairman. Should

the discussion wander too far from the point, he must diplomatically rule out that which is irrelevant, and call for the previous question. He may here and there make a suggestion or call to mind some important but forgotten fact. In the end it is his duty to sum up the group conclusion, not forgetting a minority report where there has been a difference of opinion.

The writer of this volume has spent most of his life as a student, or among students. He has devoted his energies to solving, in so far as they are soluble, the questions which disturb the minds of students,—not as a technical philosopher removed from the affairs of the world, but as a religious student and teacher who seeks the fundamental truths which lead to straight thinking, honest motives, and right dealing with one's fellow man. Ever since his own college days he has followed the discussional method—sometimes with individuals, more often in groups of a dozen or more—in trying to help students solve their own difficulties and answer their own questions. Particularly during the past five years his chief occupation has been the discussion of these questions with groups of students. Often there are not enough nights in the week to accept all the invitations from fraternities or neighorhood groups to "sit in" on discussions with them.

The interests and emphases in college life vary somewhat from year to year, hence the questions vary accordingly. But in the main and fundamentally they are the same. The writer has been over the ground again and again, not only with college men but also with college women, and in addition with thoughtful groups of business men and church women gathered together from their homes. With them the questions are much the

same, while the solutions arrived at after group discussion vary but little. He can predict almost to a nicety, when one question has been disposed of, what question will next arise. And always, when the discussion is completed, the members of the group ask for an outline, that they may go over again the thought-steps which they have followed, and so familiarize themselves with the path. Such outlines have generally been provided, but they are not sufficient. Moreover, the number of students who are seeking to work out a philosophy of life is great, while the number that any one leader can meet personally is small. It is, therefore, at the suggestion of a number of his friends among the students that this book has been written. Only a few of the more important questions could be selected for treatment in a volume of this size. Yet it is felt that those which have been selected are of so fundamental a nature that, if they are faced squarely and satisfactorily, the answers to the others will fall into place without great difficulty. And further I would say that the book is not intended as a substitute for thinking, but rather as an aid in learning to think for one's self. In beginning a series of discussions with a group of students, I usually tell them that I do not want them to think as I do, I want them to think. This volume is, therefore, but a suggestion of the method by which educated men and women may develop a satisfactory working hypothesis—a creed—for themselves. I shall be happy if it serves as a basis for discussion to some of those groups which are now burning the midnight bulb without such assistance and brings to some individual readers the light which they are seeking to illuminate their path.

For the setting of these discussions imagine, if you will, a long, low-ceilinged room in a fraternity house. The walls are lined with books or with cushioned divans. The blinds are drawn. The lights are low or turned out altogether. A log fire burns cheerily on the irons. The air is heavy with the smoke of lighted pipes. Outside, a cold wind blows from the distant lake. Snow covers the ground and clings moistly to the trees. In the gorge far below the sound of water may be heard running stiffly through banks of ice and over frozen cataracts. Within, a dozen or eighteen young men, perhaps twenty-five, are gathered in a circle around the fire, some in big easy-chairs, some sprawled out at ease along the divans, others seated on the floor or it may be on the corner of the library table. The leader has taken his place near the center of the circle, facing the fire, with a droplight and a couple of books handy, in case of need. "Fellows, we are ready. Let's begin."

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A CREED
FOR COLLEGE MEN

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CHAPTER 1

PERSONALITY, HUMAN AND DIVINE

"EITHER there is a God, or there is not," so reasoned one young man who was struggling with the reconstruction of his childhood's religion—a process that has proven fatal to their allegiance to religion in the case of so many of the younger generation during recent years. "And it is illogical," he continued, "for me to act sometimes as if there were and sometimes as if there were not. I must make up my mind either that there is or that there is not, and act accordingly."

Unfortunately there are a great many who either do not state the issue so clearly to themselves, or, facing the issue, think that really to *know* God is impossible for them. So they go muddling through life, without finding or putting any abiding religious significance into it, acting now as though there were a God and now as though there were not; rudderless ships, "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind." But a reasonable being who tries to remain permanently agnostic finds himself in a more and more uncomfortable position. Every one ought at least to try the experiment of acting consistently on one hypothesis or the other. Moreover, in preparation for deciding

which hypothesis to choose, he should see clearly that either on the hypothesis that there is no God or that we should suspend judgment, he will be living in an automatic and material world, without personality, without moral sanctions, and without choice. If there is a complete set of automatic causes operating, all chance for the play of that which we call "personality" is gone. No room is left for moral right and wrong, if every act of ours is governed automatically by law. The very fact that we can choose to act as if there were a God, or as if there were not, should show him that the negative hypothesis is wrong and that we human beings have the inestimable power of sovereignty over our destinies which is superior in its jurisdiction to the unbroken realm of law in which we are set down.

But, I hear you say, not so fast! Can you prove it? How do you know that there is not some third alternative? Perhaps our evolution into free moral beings has taken place in a world of chance. The fact that I decide that there is a God or that there is not a God does not make it so. What do you mean by the word, "God"? Am I to believe in the God of my childhood, an old man, with a long beard, sitting on a golden throne somewhere above the sky and interfering, like an Oriental despot, according to his caprice, in the affairs of men? Or am I to believe in some cold, impersonal first cause that has laid out unalterable laws of nature which He, or shall I say It, can break therefore no more than we? Or, after all, is there some personal force, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who can be accepted by the modern scientist, a God of whom it can be said that He lives and acts in our world, and without breaking His laws, himself directs the affairs of men,

responds to the cry of the human heart for love and understanding, and answers prayer? Tell me if there is such a God. Tell me how I can prove it. Tell me how I can know him. Show me how he can operate in the midst of a world of law!

The shattering of the God of our childhood has left the world a blank for many of us. We would not deceive ourselves a second time. For many more the gradually extending knowledge of the laws of nature keeps encroaching and seems to be crowding God out, until there is little or no room left for him in their lives. This process has taken away from them their Friend, their loving Father, the one to whom they turn in prayer and spiritual communion, and they know not where to find him. Yet others, and I fancy by far the largest number of all, not only believe in science, evolution, and the laws of nature, but at the same time instinctively believe also in God, and in many cases have actually experienced the feeling of the divine presence. They keep their science and their religion apart, however, fearing some fundamental contradiction exists between the two, knowing no way to keep the peace between them or to find unassailable reasons for the faith that is in them.

Because I have passed through all the phases of this readjustment and have myself known the agony of the darkness left within by the loss of God,—because I am continually meeting also students and young people who are struggling with rather less than more success to bring the knowledge gained in the laboratory and the classroom into harmony with the faith of their fathers and in the final result not only to make God reasonable but actually to experience his presence,—I

am undertaking to write this little volume. It will be as simple and as sincere a statement of the faith as I can make it, after years of thought, study, and experience in testing that faith myself, and counseling and helping, I may say, hundreds of young people to unravel the tangled skein in their own thinking, and in so doing to find peace and a reasonable basis for life and action.

The final writing of such a book might well form the crowning achievement in the life of some great scholar and thinker and man of affairs. I can lay claim to none of these qualifications. But at least I have been over the trail, I have found a pass which has now been trod by many wayfarers that leads into a goodly country where peace, contentment and effective service are to be found. So until some great man writes the great but simple book for which we are all waiting, I may be justified in setting down the main landmarks that have kept me on the course.

To any one who may be afraid of losing what seems good in the quest of something better, I would say as the Master said, "Be not afraid." The true modernist is at the same time the true fundamentalist. All the great fundamentals of the Christian religion as Christ taught it will be preserved to you in the end. You will find the God of your childhood again, the same God, after the removal of childish limitations, quite as real and personal and loving, but far more infinite and wonderful. You will find that you have lost only accretions and half-interpretations that have served to obscure the more inclusive view, the very things that have kept you from seeing that truth is always true, and that

there is no quarrel between that which is true in science and that which is true in religion.

Much of the difficulty connected with accurate thinking proceeds from a lack of clear-cut meaning to the words and terms that are used, and most of the arguments over which people haggle could be settled by recourse to a dictionary for definitions of the words involved. For instance, what do we mean by the word, "God"? Christ said, "God is a Spirit." He also calls God his Father and our Father,—an idea which is big enough to contain creation, personality, care and protection, mutual love and communion. St. Paul says, "We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device,"—that is to say, we cannot represent God in a statue or picture, with eyes and nose and mouth and hands and feet. When we say that God created man in his own image we do not mean therefore in his physical image, but rather in his spiritual image. We are like God in our souls, not in our bodies, like him in that we possess self-consciousness, reason, love, the qualities of personality. Christ said, "God is a Spirit." So are we. We are spirits, expressing ourselves by means of a body, but the body is an instrument only and not the real self at all.

A few months ago I listened to a paper which had been written as a thesis for an advanced degree at one of our universities. In this study of the American students' idea of God the writer referred to the lamentable discovery that whereas fifty-three per cent of the freshmen in that university believed in a personal God, only forty-seven per cent of the upper classmen retained such a belief; which was supposed to prove that

students are losing their religion while at college. I would give quite the opposite interpretation to his figures. The investigator had not defined his terms. He had not explained to these students what he meant by a personal God. My interpretation of his figures would be that these students while in college had been sloughing off their childish ideas of a God with hands and feet. Had his reference been to the idea of a personal God in the spiritual terms that we have been using, I believe a similar census would have shown a gain rather than a loss.

I will tell another incident to illustrate my meaning. A group of us were discussing the idea of God around the library fire in a college fraternity house. One undergraduate said he was a materialist. He could not believe in a personal God. His description showed that what he had in mind was the childish ideal of a God in human, physical form. To him personal meant person and a person an individual with a visible body. We devised a definition of God in spiritual terms, and I explained to him what I meant by a personal God and why I believed in such a God, to which he replied, "Then I can't be a materialist any longer. Yes, I can believe in that kind of a God." Nor was there a student present in that group of a dozen or more who did not agree.

Let us start, then, at the beginning, defining our terms where necessary as we go along. We can agree, I think, on a belief in the unity and reasonableness of the universe as we know it. All science demands as much as that. Without the application of reason to the discovery of laws universally operative, there would be no science. Science, therefore, postulates as the

center of that unity a First Cause, whether that First Cause be further described as an impersonal, "Mobile Cosmic Ether," or a personal God and Father as taught by Jesus Christ. Let us, too, start, therefore, with a First Cause as our hypothesis and, using our reason in a scientific manner, see where it leads us.

Natural science deals with the forms and manifestations of matter and energy in nature. Science divides matter theoretically into ninety-two elements, all of which, when their origin is traced back, lead to the First Cause. Progressive scientists are now agreed that the elements are made up of atoms that differ not materially, but structurally, from one another, and that these atoms are composed of electrons which are revolving charges of negative electricity. This means that matter is reducible to a unity and in the last analysis is a phase of energy. Matter is therefore nothing like so solid as it used to seem and the materialist finds that he has no "matter" in his old definition of it left. The dynamic constitution of matter goes far towards establishing the hypothesis of one executively dynamic First Cause and makes belief much more easy in a spiritual Creator of both matter and life.

To proceed. It is one of the fundamental hypotheses of science that the whole solar system, indeed the whole visible universe, is composed of the same kind of matter as the earth, divided into the same ninety-two possible elements, which include, therefore, all the forms of matter there are. While this was once only a hypothesis, it is now generally considered to have been established as a demonstrated fact by the use of the spectroscope. The white light of the sun divides into its spectrum by the use of prisms, the beautiful colors

of which are familiar to us all. In the spectrum Frauenhofer discovered various shaded lines, which, upon comparison with the lines produced by the various elements of the earth when heated to a luminous state, proved to correspond. Thus more than seventy of the elements of the sun have been proven by the spectroscope to be the same as the corresponding earthly elements.

Lockyear discovered certain lines in the solar spectrum produced an element which was not known to exist in the earth, which he, therefore, called "Helium." This apparent exception was supposed for a time to disprove the solar hypothesis, but after a systematic search "Helium" was discovered to be one of the rare gases of the earth and helium gas has now actually been put to work for humanity. The discovery of helium is now generally regarded as finally establishing once for all the hypothesis of the similarity in constitution of matter throughout the whole stellar universe.

You cannot very well doubt the facts as stated here. They are proclaimed by science in books open to all, which every reasonable man accepts without hesitancy. Why, then, the difficulty about believing in God? Can we not establish a belief in God and at the same time learn much about the "elements" of God's nature, by a like process and by reasoning equally cogent?

"But," you say, "God is invisible. No man hath seen God at any time." I ask you in turn, "Have you ever seen the sun?" "Why, of course I have seen the sun," you answer. On second thought, however, you will have to take that back and admit that you have never seen the sun. What you call the sun is the radiance which you see. You see by the light of the sun,

you feel the warmth of the sun, you know that practically all the power on this earth comes from the sun, and that without the sun life would be impossible; but you have never seen the sun. Yet you have never doubted the existence of the sun. Back of that radiance, that light, that warmth, that power, you know the sun to be there as the source.

By how much less should our inability to see him make us doubt the existence of God. Say God is a Spirit and we are spirits; then in Him we live and move and have our being. In Him is life and the life and light of His love is the light of men. God is the author of all the love in the world as the sun is the author of all the light in the world. We have life and our life is lit by the light of love of which we are the organ, the prism, the user, but not the producer. You cannot very well doubt the existence of the Eternal Spirit, the source of the life and light of love by which we men live.

"But," you may persist, "all that is analogy and rhetoric, not proof. I do not yet believe in a personal God." Let us then go over the ground once again and watch our steps more carefully. What must be meant by a "personal God"? Let us begin at home and try for clear ideas of what we mean by human personality. Personality may be defined as, "conscious, separate existence as an intelligent and voluntary being." A personality is a being, both ruler and subject, possessing the various attributes of life that have been christened self-consciousness, intelligence, reason, will, energy, and the emotions, such as love. I think that we are agreed that the human personality has, or *is,* all of these attributes and emotions. But whence do they

come into existence, and how do they live and prosper? Do you claim that they are attributes of matter? Can one atom love another atom? Can any one of the ninety-two elements reason about the existence of any other of the ninety-one? Is our planet either self-conscious, or conscious of the existence of the sun or of all the myriad host of heaven?

We live, then, both in a material world and in a world of personality or a spiritual world, and the attributes of personality are not included in the characteristics of matter. We have already considered the forms of matter, all the matter we know anything about, which is included in the ninety-two possible elements, and we have not found there, "conscious separate existence," we have not found intelligence, or reason, or love. We have found that matter has been simplified by science and reduced to one principle, not inert, but dynamic with energy for the origin of which the hypothesis of "mobile cosmic ether" *might* be adequate and serve as a description of the first cause. But when we attempt to account for the characteristics of personality by this hypothesis we find it insufficient. The characteristics of personality do not fit into any description of matter or of the mobile cosmic ether. You cannot go to grocery or to hypothesis and come away with what grocery or hypothesis does not contain. The first cause can leave out none, but must contain and comprehend all existing characteristics and attributes. We cannot find personality,—it is left out,—in an impersonal first cause. Why labor the question further? Since we are personalities the first cause from which we derive our being must include the personal and therefore be personal. Since we are liv-

ing persons, then the attributes of living persons must be among the characteristics of the Source of our living persons. Just as we believe that back of the light, and warmth, and power it gives off there is the molten mass of light, and warmth, and power which we call the sun; so back of the reason, intelligence, and love given off to our natures there must be a super-nature of reason, intelligence and love which we call God.

Perhaps this should not be taken as final and absolute proof of the existence of a personal God. It does, however, establish such a belief as a reasonable working hypothesis. After all, how little do we know by absolute proof. So wise a man as Socrates said that he *knew* nothing at all. All science is a product obtained by the use of working hypotheses and that product cannot be greater than its producer. As long as the hypotheses work they are accepted. As new data are discovered by men of science, some hypotheses are revised from time to time and others are abandoned. But the working hypothesis of a personal God has not been abandoned because it is the best hypothesis that has yet been devised; it is, in fact, the only hypothesis so far devised that fits all the facts as we know them.

Moreover, as we learn by the analysis of the light of the sun into its varying ray-lengths, the nature and composition of the sun, so by an analysis of the characteristics of personality we learn much of the nature and character of God. There is probably infinitely more to be known than we can learn, beyond our reach in our present finite state, and it may be forever. Like the different facets of a diamond are the different sides of personality, all emanating from one invisible and undividable conscious self.

The nature of personality in the divine being can be studied as reflected in the nature of any human personality; but the more imperfect the lens the more distortion there will be in the picture. So the more imperfect the human character the less perfectly will it depict the divine nature. If we would know God, therefore, as he can be known at his best by us, we must study him in the most perfect example of human nature that we can find among men. I find him most perfectly represented in the life and character of Jesus of Nazareth. Of that we shall speak later.

For the present it is sufficient for us to say that any personality, even our own imperfect selves, shows in the spectrum of its life, self-consciousness, reason, intelligence, will, purpose, duty, memory, and the emotions of love, joy, sorrow, sympathy,—to mention only the more important. Therefore all these at least must be included in the nature of God and we must believe God is conscious, reasonable, intelligent, loving and sympathetic.

A difficulty must at least be mentioned that comes in here. We shall be told that God is infinite and that the infinite is unknowable, for it has no bounds. We cannot altogether clear up this difficulty, but perhaps we can partially see our way out of it. Philosophy calls that which is beyond knowledge "transcendent," to indicate that it exceeds our capacities. Let us admit then, as we have already hinted, that the sum total of the attributes and capacities of God transcends human knowledge, that in this sense God is transcendent. Yet it is a fact that in creation God has revealed something of himself, and that we can know something of that something of himself so revealed. Philosophy calls

that part of the divine expressed in creation, and therefore in reach of human knowledge the "Immanent Deity." As Henry Sloane Coffin so well expressed it, the man upon the shore cannot know all the great ocean nor plumb its depths, but within the headlands is the harbor, a true part of the great ocean beyond, composed of the same element, which he can know and measure and on which he can venture. So the transcendent Deity beyond our knowledge has ventured within the headlands, within the range of our experience, so that we might know him "in part."

Even yet the question, How can man know God? still remains difficult for many. Are not we finite and He infinite? I would reply with another question. Are we finite? Our personalities express themselves through a body which is material, and hence finite, but the qualities of personality belong to the realm of the infinite. Our self-consciousness is focussed through the brain, but it is neither here nor there—it is not locatable at any particular point in space. Our thoughts range through the universe. Reason cannot be measured in kilowatts or amperes. We sometimes speak of a one-candle-power brain, but the inapplicability of the expression is its point. Love has neither length, breadth, nor thickness, height nor depth. Consent that man's personality belongs to the spiritual realm and you admit that it belongs to the infinite rather than the finite. Our object here is to emphasize the fact that our spiritual natures are of such a caliber that we can know at least something of the spiritual and eternal God. God is a spirit and so is man. St. Paul, in dealing with this subject, quoted to the Greeks their own poets, "As certain also of your own poets have

said, For we are also his offspring." We get the attributes of our personality from his super-personality; He is our spiritual Father, and we are his spiritual children. How then can parent and offspring be strangers?

"But," you say, "I ask for the living God, and you give me a definition, a hypothesis, and an argument. How can I know God?" You are quite right. It is not thus that one becomes acquainted with God, but thus he does learn that there is a God to become acquainted with. Before one can begin to know God, he must believe that He is. The intellectual difficulties must be cleared away,—for those that have them, —sufficiently for them to believe it possible to know Him and some idea must be formed by them of what kind of a God we men may expect to find. I would quote again from that same chapter of St. Paul's speech to the Athenians, the seventeenth of the Acts:

"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live and move and have our being; as certain

also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."

To know God in the sense of becoming acquainted with him is a matter of experience. To each one his own experience and such an experimental knowledge of God is the inalienable right of all. No one is condemned to read about the experiences which others have had as a substitute for living contacts of his own soul with God. Nevertheless, it is possible to learn how to search after God and how to find him for one's self from the experiences of others. Before we take up in our third chapter the question of how we may know God, we must consider first another difficulty that arises at this point. For when I discuss this subject with an individual or with a group of students, some one always asks, "If you believe in a personal God, does that mean that you have to believe in a personal devil?" Or the question may take this form, "If there is a personal God, did he create evil? Is he responsible for all the sin and suffering in the world? I cannot believe in that kind of a God." The question of the origin and nature of evil will occupy our attention for the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF EVIL

St. Augustine, the greatest of the Latin Church fathers, impaled himself on the horns of the dilemma, "Either God is not perfectly good and will not abolish evil, or God is not perfectly able and cannot abolish evil." He stated the problem bluntly and found no satisfactory way of escape from his dilemma. For thousands of years before Augustine all the great religious thinkers had been dealing with the question of evil and seeking some means of gaining freedom for humanity from the taint of sin. Pilgrimages and penances, and self-inflicted tortures, the blood of bulls and rams and goats, the sacrifice of captives and even of their own children and of the virtue of their women, have been resorted to by a befuddled humanity in order to rid themselves of this feeling of guilt, the thought of which has perhaps driven as many people insane as any other one monomania. I remember a half-crazed Englishman, whom I used to know in Paris, who was a slave to the fear that he had committed the unpardonable sin,—and his only recourse was to take another drink of absinthe. The absinthe was no more effective than the blood of bulls and goats had formerly been.

The trouble goes so deep that correcting it means the correction of such a person's whole conception of

life. All the great pre-Christian religions thought in terms of dualism. For the aboriginal One,—the hypothetical first cause,—they substituted a gladiatorial Two, and maintained that from these two all creation proceeds—good and evil, light and darkness, heat and cold, Summer and Winter, South and North, plus and minus, God and the devil. It was as though the original zero point of nothingness had split in twain and as much good as was drawn out on one side, an equal amount of evil automatically projected itself on the other. On this principle, that you cannot have the one without the other, the great Gotama Buddha saw no way of destroying the evil without at the same time destroying the good. This is what is at the bottom of the question of the modern student, "If you believe in a personal God, then do you believe in a personal devil also?"

Now any high school student has data in his possession to show that modern science has left this point of view not a leg to stand on. Heat is one form of energy produced by the motion of molecules. Actually there is no such thing as cold. Cold is merely the absence of heat. It is the same with light. Light is the form of energy taken by a still higher set of vibrations of these same molecules. Actually there is no such thing as darkness. Darkness is merely the absence of light. Does the same thing apply in the case of good and evil?

To be sure, good and evil belong to the moral sphere, while light and darkness belong to the physical. The same conclusion, therefore, by no means necessarily follows. Nevertheless a little consideration will show the cases to be in general analogous. Evil is not a

thing, a commodity. Evil cannot be weighed or measured or isolated as an element apart in a test tube. Good is the intrinsic reality, and evil is the misuse or abuse of that which is otherwise good. Just as in the field of physics temperature may be said to be beneficial or harmful according to the degree of heat or cold that fits the end in view, and illumination may be good or bad as measured by the amount of light desired for a particular purpose, so also in the moral realm; an action is designated as good or evil according to whether it promotes or does not promote a high moral purpose. The sex instinct is an excellent example of the principles here stated. When considered alone sex cannot be said to be either good or bad. According to the circumstances under which the instinct is exercised, it may lead to the highest moral good or may sink to the lowest moral degradation. There is nothing higher, more holy, more noble, nothing that brings us nearer to God himself, than the family relationship and the bringing of children into the world. When Christ wished to find the highest term by which to describe God to us he called him "Father." Yet the misuse or abuse of this same instinct is rightly called "prostitution," and is universally recognized as one of the lowest and most degrading forms of moral evil.

The question arises, What is evil and how does it differ from sin? Let us first turn to our dictionaries for definitions. Evil has been defined as, "That which hinders the accomplishment of the highest purpose." The Standard Dictionary gives, "Evil, noun, something that harms or hurts. That which prevents the enjoyment of good. Adjective,—Possessing injurious nature or qualities. Morally bad."

From the same source we learn that, "Sin is any want of conformity to or transgression of a rule of rectitude, especially as made known through the conscience or the revealed word of God. Personification or embodiment of evil." The lexicographer was evidently a Calvinist, familiar at least with the old Westminster catechism, which declares that, "Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God."

Suffering, to add one more definition that will be useful in this discussion, is "A state of anguish or pain. The bearing of pain or loss."

The difference between evil and sin seems, therefore, on careful consideration, to be that evil is the generic term for all that is harmful, while sin as a name for evil is restricted to evil of human authorship. To a thoroughgoing materialist all that which harms or hurts is evil and there is no such thing as sin to him, for there is no personality in man to be sinned against and, therefore, no evil of human authorship. In fact, to the materialist moral choice is a misnomer, every act is a link in a complete causal nexus from which the individual has no escape, and for which he cannot, therefore, be held accountable. Finally, if evil is the generic term for that which is hurtful, suffering is an after consequence of both evil and sin, for both evil and sin harm or hurt.

For instance, if I stumble in the dark and bark my shin, it hurts, but that hurt is not due to a sin. I was ignorant of the obstruction and did not intend to fall. A great deal of evil and consequent human suffering comes either from ignorance or from causes beyond human control, and in so far as this ignorance and lack

of control are unintentional and unavoidable they are not to be considered morally blameworthy.

We come now to the real question: If good is the intrinsic reality and evil is the misuse or abuse of that which, rightly used, is good, what causes people to make bad use of the good things that are in the world? Is there some force deep-seated in the human heart, which overwhelmingly inclines men to do evil? R. J. Campbell, of London, has said that, "Sin is selfishness and selfishness is sin." This may sound rather startling on first acquaintance, nevertheless it is true. I have often thought it over carefully and I have discussed the point many times with students, and I have yet to find a sin that in the last analysis did not turn out to be a form of selfishness.

Ill-gotten wealth, robbery, graft, lying, envy, jealousy, hatred, murder, licentiousness, hypocrisy—they are all forms of selfishness. Ill-gotten wealth, by which to purchase ease and enjoyment and for the display of vanity,—selfishness. Robbery and graft, the proceeds to be used in carrying out some pet personal schemes,—selfishness. Lying, to get out of a scrape and save one's own good standing,—selfishness. Envy and jealousy, bitterness of heart, tell-tale signs of the egoist whose sense of self has turned morbid with self-pity.

Hatred, the cherished malice and resentment that result from some personal injury or affront,—real or fancied,—selfishness again. Murder has its roots in anger, jealousy, hatred, envy,—selfishness all. Licentiousness seeks to avoid the cares and responsibilities of making a home while gratifying one's own physical desires and dismisses from consideration the wreckage

and moral degradation to another, which will inevitably result,—again selfishness. And finally, hypocrisy is nothing but self masquerading in false robes out of a consuming desire for the esteem of others. All these have their roots in selfishness, and I know of no sins in the calendar which cannot be traced to the same source.

We see, therefore, that selfishness and sin are practically synonymous terms, and we are not far from an answer to the ancient question of the origin of sin. What, then, is selfishness and how does it originate? The word selfishness is not here used to describe a mere childish fault or disagreeable characteristic of some people we know. Selfishness is the active and malevolent force which we have been seeking,—the force deep-seated in the human heart, which has irresistibly inclined men to do wrong. Selfishness is the desire of an individual for the possession of more than a due share of the good things of life, such as wealth, ease, pleasure, luxury, honor, and importance, or the wish to attain a share of these things without a commensurate expenditure of energy and patience in making or earning them. Selfishness is not only a passive desire or wish, it is at the same time the motor force which drives people on to action. Such action is right as long as we direct it towards the attainment of that which is good and not harmful to ourselves, and at the same time keep in due perspective the desires, needs, and rights of others. Another name for selfishness is egoism, and selfishness or egoism is at the bottom of all the sorrows and sufferings of humanity, which are not produced by ignorance or causes beyond human control.

Selfishness has its origin in separate individual existence. The universal spirit of God, which is in all and through all, cannot be selfish. But when the divine spirit is incarnated in human form, we then come into being; we become separate individuals, with self-consciousness, with wills of our own, and with the power of choice. We have the instinct of self-preservation. We feel hunger and demand food. Our bodies are exposed to heat and cold, we want, therefore, houses and clothing. As time goes on and human ingenuity increases, our latitude in the satisfaction of our desires likewise increases. We begin to rejoice in the fact of ownership and the knowledge of possession. In the getting of the "goods" and possessions of life, we develop the joy of achievement and come to take pride in our own accomplishments.

All these things are good. They are what make life worth the living. But because we are separate individuals, we do not have the other man's instinct of self-preservation; we do not feel his hunger and thirst; our bodies do not suffer when he is exposed to heat or cold or nakedness. Therefore, we may go on attending to our own needs, wants, and desires, oblivious to his lack or suffering. We may pile up houses and lands and possessions, which we do not need, but which we think we might need some day or which we want for the very joy of possession. We take our pleasure and enjoy our luxury, we strive for honor and position without considering the feelings, the desires, the rights, of others. We even find our chief pleasure in the display of our success and achievement in contrast to their failure and want. This is selfishness. And in place of the desired admiration which we expect our egotis-

tical display to create in others it produces instead envy, jealousy, and hatred, which we have seen are other forms of selfishness.

Let us take another illustration from physics. When various fireballs, which later cool into planets, fly off from a gaseous mass of matter whirling through space, each of these embryo planets sets up its own center of gravity. The attraction of gravitation not only holds and draws the mass together until its crust hardens, but it also sets up a universal field of attraction which tends to draw all matter to itself. In the field of physics there is a balancing counter-attraction and so the universe is held in equilibrium. So in the spiritual world. As soon as we become individuals, we set up our spiritual center of gravity. The instincts and desires of which we have been speaking exercise an attractive influence in the surrounding realm of spirit, drawing in of its riches,—and because we, though spiritual beings, express ourselves through physical bodies, we draw in also physical riches. But because of our imperfect control of our freedom the spiritual counter-attractions have never yet been properly adjusted and a state of moral equilibrium has not been attained. Thus self-respect and self-interest are prostituted into self-aggrandisement and selfishness, with all their train of sin and sorrow for humanity.

There are several other questions that must claim our consideration. We have seen that all sin is in the last analysis some form of selfishness, and therefore finds no root except in sovereign individuals. Does that mean that all selfishness is sin, *i.e.,* that autonomous existence is itself evil? This is a very important question, the answer to which will determine the entire life

of the individual and the race that hazard their welfare upon it. Buddha answered the question in the affirmative. Individual existence to him is itself evil and the only cure for it is "the annihilation of the will to live." All desires, all worldly possessions, love, and all the joys that we count as good, life itself, must be scorned as evil in order to attain to salvation, which consists in reabsorption into the common source of life. It is easily seen how such a doctrine stuns the will, destroys all appetite for action, and takes the life out of living. No wonder that all countries in which Buddhism has attained general acceptance have sunk into a torpor deeper than that produced by opium.

To buoyant spirits with a Christian background at least for their thinking, if not a full individual acceptance of Christianity, such a doctrine is almost beyond comprehension. Yet the taint of this belief, borrowed from the Oriental dualisms during the middle ages, in the form of monasteries and nunneries and a celibate priesthood, has crept into certain forms of Christianity. But such a doctrine is entirely foreign to the life and teachings of Christ, "who came eating and drinking," and to whom life with all its joys was and is essentially good.

If we return to one of our first principles, that evil of human authorship is the result of a selfish disregard of the needs and rights of others in pursuit of one's own ends, we shall see that autonomous individual existence is not itself evil, that nothing is in that sense by nature evil. Only by misuse or abuse does a sovereign existence turn temporarily into an evil. The question really becomes obscured through a double use of the term "selfishness." Selfishness can mean

self-respect, self-development, self-enjoyment, the care of one's life, health, person, and property, forms of conduct that certainly are not evil, but rather our highest duty and highest good, in spite of the fact that Buddha condemned them. But if by "selfishness" we mean the grasping of more than a fair share and a consideration of ourselves carried to the point of the neglect of the rights and feelings of others, then selfishness is the root of all the evil of human authorship. The term is generally used in this latter sense, and this was the meaning of R. J. Campbell when he said, "Selfishness is sin and sin is selfishness."

The practical question really is, how far one's right to consider his own interest goes and the point where he should begin to subordinate that interest to the interests of others? Where must self-respect make way for humility? Where must self-assertion stop and service commence? When does selfishness begin to be sin? It is like the registration of heat by a thermometer,—we have already spoken of the likeness between heat and cold (which is the absence of heat), and good and evil. Where should we fix our zero point,—at "zero," which was supposed to be absolute cold, or at 32°, which is freezing, or at summer heat of 84, or at blood heat of 98 2-5? The savage fixes the stopping point of self-assertion at absolute zero. The world in general for ages fixed it at freezing,—do not actively harm your neighbor, "thou shalt not kill," "thou shalt not steal"; the moralist fixes it at summer heat,—a kindly and just attitude towards all. Jesus Christ fixes it at blood heat. He voices the ultimate and final principle which is the answer to all this age-long human search and struggle after righteousness. "Thou shalt love the

Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbor as thyself."

This statement we can all understand. It is a principle dynamic by nature which looses active forces for good against the power of evil. It does not stop at the mere freezing point of not harming others, but it contemplates an eternal battle against all evil and sin both in ourselves and in others, which must eventually destroy evil and bring the Kingdom of God on earth. It is a personal standard and it has a definite meaning for each one of us. We all know where to begin. We all love ourselves enough already. There is no trouble about that half. It does not in general mean to love ourselves less, but rather God and our neighbor more. It is not inconsistent with the highest self-respect, unlimited self-development, a sense of personal pride and achievement, the infinite worth of the individual, ourselves and others, but at the same time it provides against encroachments on our part upon others, and for our finding part of our joy and welfare in their joy and sense of achievement and welfare.

We see then that it is possible to destroy evil not only without destroying the good, but rather by increasing it. The good is the positive, the real, and the permanent. Evil is ephemeral and will eventually vanish. It was necessary for us to be entrusted with the power to violate the rules of the game of life in order that we might rise to a realization of the righteousness of observing those rules. The knowledge of good and evil came together, and is so explained in the Bible account of the Fall of Man. But from our modern point of view man fell up rather than down when he

attained the knowledge which differentiated him from the brute by giving him a moral sense.

Doubtless some of the more conservatively minded will object to our explanation of the origin and nature of evil on the ground that it robs the sense of sin of some of its old fierce reality. "You tell us that evil of human authorship is the result of selfish violations of the rules of the game of life in the pursuit of one's own ends. Sin, therefore, is only a passing phase and has no ultimate reality, for it will cease when those violations cease. Whereas sin is a reality and such a menace that it is the most horrible and obstinate thing in the world." But explaining a thing does not change its nature at all nor lessen its reality, and we believe that we have followed the only explanation which fits the facts. A careful diagnosis of the cause of a disease is necessary before any one can begin on the cure. Take a parallel instance. Modern science has come to the conclusion, after a more careful study of the facts, that matter is not an ultimate reality but a phase of energy. This does not make matter any less real to our experience. We can no more walk through a stone wall than before. But the better, more accurate explanation does help us in our dealings with the physical and chemical problems of matter. No, sin is no less real, no less loathsome, horrible, and destructive than before, *in its nature,* but with the better explanation of it, resulting from more careful study, we should now be better able to deal with it, and have some hope of its ultimate removal, which was impossible under the old conception, which asserted that the majority of mankind were subject to eternal condemnation. Moreover, the idea, according to the modern point of view

here given of the origin and nature of evil, appears to be entirely in harmony with the mind and point of view of Jesus Christ. This should be a sufficient answer by their own standards to the objections of such conservatively minded people.

The answer to our question "Do you believe in a personal devil?" should now be comparatively simple. If good and evil are equally ultimate realities and one cannot exist without the existence of an equal amount of the other, then belief in a personal God necessitates a belief in an equally powerful personal devil. This has been the belief of millions of humanity for thousands of years. But if good is the ultimate reality and evil is the misuse or abuse of that which is good by nature, then there is no place in our reading of the scheme of things for a personal devil.

The question still remains as to whether there is or is not a prince of evil spirits whom we may call the devil or by his proper name, Satan, the tempter. Now we know and can know but little in this life as to the existence of disembodied spirits. Science has not yet definitely established a single fact regarding them. The question must remain for the time being, perhaps for all time, an open one. At least we have no reason to believe that there is any such thing as a universal and all-pervading devil, or a devil of any sort that plays any large part in human affairs. All the diseases and plagues, which were formerly thought to be the work of the devil and his underdevils, are now known to be caused by germs, and the terrors of nature formerly ascribed to the same source are now explained by the laws of physics, chemistry, and electricity. A large part of the supposed work of the devil has thus been

taken away from him. Moreover, we do not need to look elsewhere nor to attempt to evade responsibility, since sufficient cause for the evil and sin in our hearts can be found in the selfishness which we harbor there, without laying it on the devil. I, therefore, personally prefer to think the terms "devil, Satan, Beelzebub," as used in the Bible, are simply dramatic personifications of the forces of evil. Though evil spirits, fallen angels, saturated with selfishness, may exist, I do not find that they play any part in our lives, or that they possess any practical reality for our problems.

And now let us turn to the final question, the dilemma of Augustine, "Either God is not perfectly good and will not abolish evil, or God is not perfectly able and cannot abolish evil." When I strike an apparent *cul de sac* like that, I always look around for a third way out. I hold that God is perfectly good and that God is perfectly able. On that basis, the answer must be that God is abolishing evil. God, to whom a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day, is not subject to our human impatience about doing it immediately. He did not make us sin in the first place, and he is giving us time to work it out for ourselves. And in the process of working our own way out of the evil of human authorship we gain that inestimable boon that goes by the name of character. If the master does all the sums for his pupil, the boy will never learn to figure for himself. The child whose parents protect him from all the hardships, labors and temptations of life, never knows what real life is and never develops a character of his own.

It is evident from an examination of the facts, be it added, that God is not only allowing us to work out

the problem of the abolition of evil, but he is actively engaged with us in the struggle. "For God sent not his only son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Our loving Heavenly Father has shown us the way and given us the power to win the final victory by the life and example and power of Jesus Christ, and he has also given us the right to appeal direct to him through prayer for guidance and strength in our struggle. The next subject for our consideration will be the personality and place of Christ in relation to the Father and in human life.

CHAPTER 3

THE DIVINITY AND PERSONALITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Is Jesus divine? Is he God,—or a God,—or the only begotten Son of God? Is he a demi-god, *i.e.*, half god and half man, and if so does his divinity lack something of divinity and his humanity lack something of humanity, because neither is complete and entire? Or has he two complete natures, one divine and one human? Is he Lord and Saviour? Is he the ideal man? Or is he only a man, one of us? Christians, who are supposed to love one another, have fought over these questions for more than a thousand years, not only with the pen and rhetoric, but with fire and sword, resorting to the fiercest tortures and exhibiting the bitterest hatred.

As a friend of mine used to say, "It's a pity they ever raised the question of his divinity, for while they squabble about who he is, they forget Jesus himself, his love, his wisdom, his courage and strength, together with his gentleness and devotion to his friends, his fearlessness and even radiant joy in the face of torture and death, his faith in the Father and in himself and in the final goodness of poor old weak humanity." Yes, it is a pity all these questions were ever raised, for in the tangle of theological speculations the real Jesus has almost been lost. Nevertheless, since the

questions have been raised, and since representatives of the different theories are so insistent even to-day upon their own particular form of belief, it is perhaps necessary that we take them up before turning to the life and message of the Christ himself.

What, then, do we mean by divinity and by humanity? Is there one kind of nature or of personality which is divine and another which is human? Apparently not. From the point of view of theory, we have argued in our first chapter to the existence of a personal God from the existence of human personality. We have found that the spectrum of human personality includes self-consciousness, reason, intelligence, will, and the emotions, and that as their source these same qualities must therefore be in the First Cause, that God is a personal God. We know and can know of no chord in the divine nature which does not blend with an answering chord in the human soul. Just as a man with ever so good sight cannot explain color to a blind man, so God can reveal to us no quality of his personality which is not, in our man measure, a quality of our personality.

Now we are prepared for a definition of divinity from a practical standpoint. Divinity has been defined as, "A spiritual being in which there is no evil. . . . One who expresses perfectly the qualities of deity." The Standard Dictionary says, "Divinity, a being who partakes of the divine nature or qualities. The character of having divine origin, emanating from the divine nature, or possessing divine excellence. . . . Deity, a god, divine person, the true God. The natural character of the attributes of God."

To be sure, all creation has a divine origin and ema-

nates from the divine nature, and in the sense that we do not believe creation has a non-divine origin, I take it we must all be pantheists. For God is all in all. But even in this dragnet use of the term, since all creation includes humanity, humanity would not be of a different sort of nature from the divine nature. In common usage, however, divinity applies to the spiritual, not to the material and bodily. If a divinity is a spiritual being in whom there is no evil,—one who expresses perfectly the divine nature,—we qualify to this extent: we are spiritual beings, we express the divine nature, but we fail of divinity and are disqualified by the evil that is in our lives. We do not express perfectly the divine nature because of the selfishness which is a present characteristic, but not an original element, in our human constitution. Is it fair to say, then, that if we could find somewhere a perfect human being he would be divine? If there has ever lived a man who was entirely unselfish would he ever have sinned, and would he not, therefore, perfectly express the divine nature?

Accordingly the real question before us is, was Jesus entirely unselfish, and free from the short-sightedness that leads us to take illegitimate means of gaining our ends, and did he thus perfectly express the divine nature? Are his standards—intellectual, moral and spiritual—perfect standards? Did he live up to those standards in his own life? The standards which Jesus set we find displayed in his life, which is described in the four Gospels, but best for our study as condensed in the Sermon on the Mount. Previous to this time rules for the conduct of life had been arranged in a number of codes, some of which have come down to us, for in-

stance the Code of Hammurabi and the (fragmentary) recently discovered Assyrian Code. Of the known codes there can be little question but that the Ten Commandments as given in the twentieth chapter of the book of Exodus, in force among the Jews, is the highest of them all. Yet eight out of these ten commandments, in which "the moral law is summarily comprehended," are negative. They simply bring the moral standard up to the zero point of comparative harmlessness.

Noble as these commandments are when compared with other like standards, the standard set by Jesus is infinitely higher and his insight infinitely deeper. He does not attempt to devise a better set of brakes or more of them. He proposes to discharge selfishness rather than curb it and secure a new driver for the car. These are the qualifications which a new driver must possess: he must be humbled by his mental poverty; saddened by the misfortunes of others, but not by his own; modest in the price that he puts on his own services; rather be right than be President in his disposition; merciful to others, but merciless on himself; his attitude toward others one of pure good-will unspotted by envy; playing the fireman instead of adding fuel to the flames of any quarrel; willing to be wronged, but never to wrong; willing to be misrepresented and persecuted, but never to misrepresent nor persecute. That is the portrait of the Man of the Beatitudes. He is poor in spirit, sad for others, meek in regard to his own pay, hungry and thirsty for a high character, merciful toward others, has a heart of pure good-will, will not quarrel, but will help settle one, will not persecute though persecuted, will not revile though reviled. This is the celebrated doctrine of non-resistance at the heart

of the Christian Gospel. It is not anti-selfishness; it is not anti-anything. It is not engaged in applying any set of brakes to selfishness (which is sin's real name) nor in any kind of a contest with it. A new driver has taken the place of the old at the wheel, the very opposite of him, for the old driver was proud of all he knew; indifferent to other's troubles, but not to his own; he never got all he earned, no matter how high he was paid; he was bound to succeed by hook or crook, merciless on others and easy on himself; he trampled on anybody and everybody that stood in his way; he was quarrelsome, but never mixed in a quarrel not his own; willing to wrong but not to be wronged; willing to misrepresent and persecute, but making a great fuss over misrepresentation or persecution of himself, fancied or real. Elsewhere Jesus summarizes the moral law with the following statement (Luke 10, 29), "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." By way of amplification of the meaning of the word "neighbor," he gives us the inimitable story of the Good Samaritan. And in summing up the Sermon on the Mount he says, "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect."

Shall we not say then that Jesus set a perfect standard, even in these days of the popularity of the doctrine of relativity, when one hesitates to call anything perfection? As an ideal toward which to strive do you see any fault in it? Do you see any point where it could be improved? Is it not clear that if any man lived up to that standard, and loved God with all his heart, his neighbor as himself,—and his enemy as well,

—that such a man would be without selfishness and without sin?

And let us note here that this highest moral ideal is based upon a belief in a personal God. "Love your enemies,—that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give his spirit to them that ask him." By their fruits ye shall know them. A belief in a personal God is responsible for our highest moral ideal. Does that not go far towards establishing the security of our hypothesis of a personal God?

"But," you may ask, "how do we know that Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount?" First I would answer that no other teacher or great historical character of equal antiquity is attested by equally good documents or has had his life and teachings subjected to more searching criticism. We cannot go into the proof of this statement here, but it will withstand the most exhaustive investigation. That the Sermon on the Mount was given word for word all at one time just as recorded, I would scarcely assert. But there is no longer any serious doubt that it represents fairly and accurately what Jesus taught. Its intrinsic value makes it its own best credential. No imitator or impostor produced it. As well try to imitate the air that we breathe. The best given to us by other great minds of history, from Confucius and Mencius to Plato and Marcus Aurelius, is at times admirable, but not one of them has ever visioned an ideal so high as that set by Jesus Christ.

The uniqueness of Jesus appears, however, far more distinctively in his own person than in what he taught.

He lived his doctrines to the full. In fact he lived the way of life first, and out of the abundance of treasure laid up in heaven garnered in his experience imparted to his disciples as much as they could grasp of the principles that he had proved out in his life. Examine his life carefully and you will find that it corresponds absolutely to the principles that he laid down. He not only says, "Love your enemies, and pray for those which despitefully use you and persecute you,"—but he also prays on the cross when put to the supreme test, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Jesus not only tells his disciples to rejoice and be exceeding glad when men reviled them and persecuted them falsely for his sake,—but at the Last Supper before he went out to receive the crown of thorns and the mocking and spitting and jeers and false accusation and be subjected to the agonizing death of the cross, he also says to his fearful disciples, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full. . . . And ye now, therefore, have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." Was he bemoaning his fate? Was he seeking sympathy? He was not even thinking of himself. He was trying to comfort his disciples because his heart was stirred by their sorrow and faithlessness, and pouring out his affection upon them he tried to impart to them some of his own glad confidence. In what would have been to others an hour of sorrow and fear for themselves, he had joy and to spare. Does he tell his disciples not to fear but

to have confidence in God in the approaching tragedy? —watch how he acts himself in that hour.

Why should I further labor the point? Take any teaching of his to be found in the Gospels and you will find it fully and perfectly exemplified in his life. He was absolutely fearless. He was absolutely loyal. He was absolutely loving. He was absolutely unselfish. He could not be driven or surprised into any falsifying of his principles, into any lowering of his standards. What is your verdict, then, in answer to the question, Did Jesus live up to the perfect standard that he set in his own life and thus set a perfect example to humanity? His severest critics have not pointed out a single instance in which he failed or fell short.

"But," you may say, "how can one be sure that he was perfect? How can one be sure that he was sinless? We have only fragmentary accounts of his life and our own powers of judgment, which are subject to error, by which to judge. Nothing human is perfect." I can only speak for myself. I know that before him I stand with bowed head, and penitent heart, and say in awe, "Jesus, my Lord and Master." Though all else may be relative in human affairs, here for me is the Absolute —absolute Goodness, absolute Truth, and absolute Beauty.

Further, in all our measuring, the standard of comparison by which we measure is not subject to question. In each case there must be a final standard. In the Bureau of Standards in Washington there is the standard pound, the standard foot, the standard quart measure, and in Paris the standard meter, worked out scientifically of metal alloys, so that at a certain temperature it is *the* meter. By it the standard for the

kilo and the liter are also set. Though it may be said in general that nothing in human affairs is perfect, this is the perfect meter. Whatever its length may be, that is a meter. By it all other meters are measured. In the same sense Jesus Christ is the perfect standard in moral values. There is no other. He is our embodied highest sense of right and wrong. By comparison with his teaching and life as the final standard we judge our own acts. Since our consciences approve his standard, as set in his teaching and as lived in his life, as the highest that we know, to what other standard can we go for criteria by which to judge any act of his a possible imperfection? The magnetic pole may vary from the true polar axis, and the North Star may wander in the heavens, but Jesus Christ is the norm by which humanity directs its course, and we say with his Roman judge, "I find in him no fault." (John 18-38.)

All questioning must come to a full stop before the sinlessness, the perfection of the character of Jesus, because there is no standard to which we can take the standard by which we measure everything else of the same kind, be it length, cubic content, or character in its dimensionlessness. He is the measure by which we measure goodness, truth, and beauty. And on the principle that a divinity is a spiritual being, in whom is no evil, as we have said, if we could find somewhere a human being devoid of evil, he would be divine, seeing that we are all the sons of God who are spiritual beings that express the divine nature but imperfectly, is not Jesus thus divine? If we look at him from the divine standpoint manward, we can say with St. Paul, "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,"

and if we look at him from the human standpoint, Godward, we can say with Sidney Lanier:

> But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
> But Thee, O poet's poet, Wisdom's tongue,
> But Thee, O man's best man, O Love's best love,
> O perfect life, in perfect labor writ,
> O all men's Comrade, Servant, King and Priest,
> What *if* or *yet,* what mole, or flaw, or lapse,
> What least defect, or shadow of defect,
> What rumor tattled by an enemy,
> Of inference loose, what lack of grace,
> Even in torture's, or sleep's, or death's,
> O, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
> Jesus, good Paragon, Thou Crystal Christ?

Thus divinity and humanity come to a perfect convergence in the mind of Christ. In him we see perfectly reflected the Divine character because he is a perfect man. To return to our analogy of the use of the spectrum in the study of light, we can study the divine nature through any human personality, just as we can study the light through any lens. As we get perfect refraction, however, only through a perfect lens, so we only get the nature of God perfectly reflected through Jesus Christ.

At the Mt. Wilson observatory in California is a giant reflecting telescope through which the light of the sun is studied. The sun shines down upon the great lens with desert brilliance. Most of the blinding light and scorching heat pass through and are dispersed, but upon the surface of the lens is reflected a perfect image of the disk of the sun, in which all the properties of the light may be studied. The observer looks on that reflection and says, "I see the sun." But it is not in reality

the sun that he sees, rather the image of the sun, the blinding light whose burning vapors literally hide the sun itself from our human sight. So when we look upon the face and character of Jesus Christ, we may say in the same sense that we see God, for in him we see reflected the perfect image of the invisible God, who is only hidden from us by sheer excess of light, and through a study of his nature we come to know the divine Personality; through communing with him we are able to commune with the great God of all the World.

As St. John expresses it (John 1, 18), "No man hath seen God at any time; the . . . Son, . . . hath declared him." Or as St. Paul says, using the same figure, ". . . For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4, 4.) In Luke (1, 78) he is called "the dayspring (or sunrising) from on high," and St. Paul calls him (Col. 1, 15), "the express image of the invisible God." Finally the author of the Hebrews uses the expression of him (Heb. 1, 3), "The brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." Thus we see that there is nothing essentially new in this idea, though perhaps the scientific application of the figure gives it a more tremendous grip upon our minds than it possessed in the days when these passages were written. By this method of approach God ceases to be the abstract idea conceived of him by the philosopher and becomes in the personality of Jesus Christ a living reality, for those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand.

"But," some one may say, "I do not see why Jesus

should be unique. I do not see why he should be perfect and all of us be sinful. Nor can I accept the story of the virgin birth as sufficiently well established historically for me to base a whole philosophy of life upon it. If it should be established to my satisfaction it would only take him away from me by removing him from the human category and thus make it impossible for me to follow him as an example."

First let us deal with the uniqueness. Of course Jesus is unique. There is only one of each of us. There is only one God. There was only one Confucius, only one Copernicus, only one Christopher Columbus. There is only one of you and only one of me. There may be three brothers and they may be triplets, but each has a different character and a distinct personality. No two play the same rôle in life. Moreover, there is some genius supreme in each of the arts and sciences, his advent prepared for by discoveries, by explorations, by a tantalizingly slow intellectual development until everything was in readiness. Thus centuries prepared the way in the Greek world for Plato and Aristotle, and the human mind has not to this day surpassed them in their genius for philosophy, mathematics, and art. Late comers into these fields may have worked out other applications of their principles, but in his own particular field each of them is still supreme.

As none of these unique characters can be isolated from his environment and social heritage, no more can Jesus of Nazareth. The most conservative literalist would scarcely deny this to be true. The New Testament follows the Old. Jesus is the son of David. He bases his teaching upon Moses and the Prophets. The Messiah had been promised for a thousand years, his

way had been prepared for him for more than two thousand years by the evolution of the strictest moral and religious culture that the world has ever seen. It would be strange if all this preparation had not culminated in some supreme religious genius. Without that preparation as his own background and the background of his audience, Jesus could not be expected to be born or to teach as he taught and live as he lived, nor could we explain how he would find any usable social and religious medium in which to propagate his faith. Even as it was they were far from ready to receive or to understand him.

This gives us a proper setting for a life like that of Jesus, and for the work of a great Teacher. If we stopped here, however, it would leave the impression, so some might say, that he was a man, perhaps the best of men, but only a man. But let us remember that we are all the sons of God, that Jesus himself found infinite worth in every human spirit, that the expression "only a man" is an unworthy one, therefore, for the true Christian to use. Let us remember that we found no sufficient ground to believe in two kinds of natures, one divine and the other human, and our conclusion that if we found anywhere a perfect man he would be divine. And let us remember that we have found him to be the standard by which we judge right and wrong in our lives. By this token we know he is the perfect man, unique even among the unique sons of God. The crowning task of earth fell to Jesus—to reveal to man the flawless life of a perfect soul. His tools are not the hammer, the mallet and the brush, but love, faith, joy, and truth. Therefore I say that Jesus is uniquely unique in that his genius led him to work in the stuff

of his own nature rather in making or devising something outside of himself. How could God be revealed to man except by some being like God?

One revelation of this kind will do. For such is the nature of man, "Born for righteousness," as Mencius says, that having once seen the perfect ideal he will never let it out of his sight but will struggle endlessly to make his own life approach it as a limit. We are all the children of the heavenly Father. God has been revealing himself not only to man but in man progressively through the ages. We are all different, but we are all "broken lights" modeled after the perfect Light. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." It was therefore to be expected that somewhere amongst all the billions of faltering children who have been letting God incarnate himself imperfectly in life, there should be one perfect Incarnation of the divine Personality. And such was the expectation of millions of men even before the coming of Jesus. Not only did the Hebrew prophets teach of the promised Messiah, who gradually developed into "Immanuel,"—"God-with-us," but the Wise Men of Persia promised to their followers the incarnation of Mitra, the Light. Indeed, almost all the other religions show by their theoganies and theophanies that the idea inheres in human thought.

Turning now to the second part of our question, Was it necessary for Jesus to be born of a virgin without a human father in order that he should be the "Son of God,"—divine, and is it necessary for us to believe so in order to be Christians? In the first place I do not say that he was not born of a virgin; it is very hard to prove a negative. The story of the virgin birth is in the Bible, and if it is of any help to the faith of some

to believe in it, I would not shake that faith. But that they should demand belief in it of those who cannot give it in order to be reckoned fully followers of Christ seems to me un-Christian. Christ enforced no such demand. He did not even mention it. It simply cannot be an essential part of his gospel if he did not even mention it, for he certainly would never leave out any of the essentials. Neither did Paul mention it and he wrote the earliest of the New Testament books and gives us the fullest exposition of the Christian doctrine that we have. John, who understood him best of all, never mentions it. Peter, the leader of the early followers of Christ, never mentions it, and no mention of it occurs in any of the sermons quoted in the Acts of the Apostles. I count it proven, therefore, that if a doctrine at all of the Christian religion, it certainly cannot be an important or essential one.

Moreover, on purely scriptural grounds, I think that Christians who so prefer may be fairly allowed the option of believing that Jesus was born in the ordinary way, since in several places Joseph is spoken of as his father, and the only two New Testament books that make any reference to the story of the virgin birth definitely trace the ancestry of Jesus back to David through Joseph.[1]

But for those who stick to fundamentals the question is not an important one, as it seems not to have been

[1] Catholic and Protestant, liberal and conservative alike, admit that St. Matthew thus traces the ancestry through Joseph. The words are too explicit to be explained away. To any unprejudiced scholar this ancestry through Joseph is taken for granted also of St. Luke's gospel. But the fact that the two accounts have different names for the first fourteen ancestors creates additional difficulty. The literalists arrived at the ingenious explanation

to Jesus himself and his disciples. The whole plea of this chapter is simply that we take him as he is and at his own valuation when he says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Others will say our difficulty begins where the difficulties thus far discussed leave off. It seems to us that for people who are as weak and sin-ridden as most of us are it is hopeless to try to follow and imitate the greatest religious genius of all time, as hopeless as it would be for us to try to discover the wireless or invent the aeroplane. The key to the solution of this problem shall be given in the words of one who has expressed it far better than I could hope to do: "Did you ever stop to think that a very ordinary type of mind can use nature's forces after the genius has discovered how? It takes an Edison to discover the how of electricity, but it doesn't take an Edison to manipulate our electric light plant, or to run our street cars. All this is the work of the run of men like you and me. My friends, it doesn't take a religious genius to know the power and wisdom of God, and to use that power after the secret of getting into touch therewith is revealed. It simply takes, on our part, time and willingness to learn. The first Christians were among the lowest and simplest types of men; they were, many of them, slaves, most of them from the very humblest walks of life, but because of their teachableness, their willingness to learn, God, instead of being a mere abstract idea, became a living, mighty power and reality in their lives. And through

that one line traces through Joseph and the other through Mary. The genealogy in Matthew through Joseph, however, cannot be explained away without being confronted with the difficult riddle of the two sets of names.

their connection with Him they were made strong enough to cope with an environment which was sinful and cruel,—made strong to resist the sins of the flesh and spirit and became the masters of a new type of life." [2]

Thus we see how Jesus can be and is both the unique son of God, in whom "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and also the Son of Man, our elder brother, and that there is no need to let theological speculation take him from us to make a demigod, but that he can remain our friend and example, our Lord and our Master.

[2] Martin D. Hardin, *How to Know and Use God.*

CHAPTER 4

BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT

THE words, "body, mind, and spirit," are everyday expressions. We cannot think, speak, or act without them, or without dealings with the realities that lie behind them. Humanity spends most of its time and energies getting food to support the body and clothing with which to cover it. We use the best years of our lives in trying to educate our minds, for in education to-day is the great cure-all for human ills. And the Spirit represents the "we" or the personality that is the motivating force behind all this fervid activity. Yet how seldom do we stop to consider the relationships of these three. We simply take them for granted and get along with them in more or less hit-or-miss fashion.

Their relationships constitute a philosophical problem as old as human thought, and Aristotle gave perhaps as rational an explanation of them as the best philosophers to-day can give. As a science this field is still a great undiscovered country. It lies beyond, I trust just beyond, our newest intellectual frontier, a wilderness penetrated here and there by the Daniel Boones and Meriweather Lewises and Kit Carsons of physiological chemistry, psychological analysis, and philosophical biology. These new sciences are making many discoveries and are doing a work of exploration that will throw some light upon the final map of the region, but

we must freely admit most of the country remains still uncharted. And here it is important for us to remind ourselves that as sciences they deal each with one or at most two aspects of this triad of body, mind, and spirit, and that each has to do only with the actually ascertained facts of its own particular field. To bring all three sciences into a harmonious perspective we must enter the field of philosophy, or what William James calls "over-beliefs," and there, as long as we account for all ascertained facts, each of us has a right to depend, in fact must depend, on the rational faculty of his own mind. For the ascertained facts we must depend on the scientists, each in his own field, since it is impossible for any one person to go into all the laboratories and learn all the facts for himself. In this same way the scientist is equally dependent on other scientists for the facts outside his own immediate field. Therefore he has no more right to be dogmatic or positive in regard to his perspective of the whole, his philosophy of life, than any other well-informed, careful thinker.

We have and ought to have the greatest respect for the brand of philosophy offered to us by our scientists. They have solved many of the baffling problems of existence. Many other problems have been solved on the basis of the facts provided by them. The great scientists are logical thinkers, have trained minds, and a passion for truth. Unfortunately, however, many scientists have concentrated their attention so long on their own particular set of facts in regard to the impersonal that they ignore many other facts outside their own field of the impersonal. This renders their solutions so partial and often so faulty that even "the man

in the street" instinctively feels that there is something missing from them. This is the case with Darwin's materialistic evolution and impersonal First Cause. His sole reference to the whole question of personality, will, and purpose, is the single expression, "the inspiration of genius," and he never inquires into the enormous meaning of the phrase. So also with our behavioristic psychologists of to-day. Many of them are as dogmatic in temper as theologians used to be. Their principle of explanation that every effect is the offspring of a previous and complete set of causes works very well within certain limits, but when they have finished, often giving it the right of eminent domain, with the picture puzzle of our existence there remain several large gaps unfilled and a whole handful of pieces that do not fit in anywhere. Progress, design, purpose, represent the gaps unfilled; choice, will, morality, the qualities of personality, are the pieces left over for which they find no place. No choice, therefore, is left us as seekers after a philosophy on which to base our lives but to look over the ground and choose the theory which best seems to fit the facts.

First let us clear the ground by defining our terms. Body, the material physical equipment of each individual, needs no further definition; likewise brain, that group of sensitized nerve cells, a part of the body, in which our thoughts and sense experiences are recorded. But when we come to the terms "mind, soul, spirit," there is no full agreement; and when we go further and try to explain their interrelationships, our real difficulties begin. Mind has been defined as, "That which thinks, feels, and wills; the subject of conscious states; the entire psychical being of man." Soul: "In

present general acceptance, the incorporeal nature of man, or principle of mental and spiritual life; the part of man's nature which is specially characterized by the attributes of self-consciousness, conscious personal identity, reason, conscience, and the higher emotions, especially as in present or former association with the body, and viewed as surviving its dissolution; the spiritual nature as incarnate." SPIRIT: "The form of being or substance characterized by self-consciousness, self-activity, and personality, and by the absence of the properties that distinctly belong to matter, as extension, inertia, etc. The rational principle of the human body. . . . Some higher forms of religion regard it as that by which man is capable of conscious relation to God and of receiving divine influences." (*Standard Dictionary.*)

Thus we see that mind, soul, and spirit are not like three separate business concerns, conducting three separate businesses, but like the members of a firm conducting the one business. They are three aspects of the same substance or being, the word substance being here used not in any material sense, but in its original meaning of that which stands beneath. We see that mind is the aspect of the vital principle as it sustains a dual relation to a brain on the one hand, and to conscious states of thought, reason, memory, and sense-perception on the other. Soul is another aspect of that same vital principle as it sustains a dual relation to the divine or to ultimate being on the one hand and to separate individual existence on the other. Spirit is that same vital principle considered absolutely apart from any finite corporeal relationships. "The word 'soul' differs from spirit as the species differs from the genus. Soul is

limited to being that is or has been connected with a body, while spirit applies as well to being that is believed never to have been incarnate. We speak of the Spirit of God, but not of the Soul of God." (*Standard Dictionary.*)

Materialism regards the soul as a function of the body. As we have already suggested, materialism is pretty much discredited in its cruder forms, since we have found that matter is a phase of energy, and that there is no matter in the last analysis at all. But its lineal descendants are the determinist, mechanist, and behaviorist schools of thought. They have this in common: all the qualities of life and personality which religion ascribes to a soul of divine origin and relationship they ascribe to some sort of chemical action in the brain and nerve centers. They hold that if you tear down the human house you will find no occupant inside; if you take apart the chemical elements of bone and brain and muscle there will be no personality left. They claim for their single principle of explanation a "complete causal nexus," universal jurisdiction, that is that every act, thought, and emotion of the individual is the final link for the time being in the ball and chain of a complete set of previous causes,—chemical action, heredity, environment, habit, etc. No room is left for chance, or choice, for will or endeavor, or morality. For if everything is predetermined we cannot be held morally responsible for our actions.

As an example of this point of view we quote from Mr. F. H. Bradley (*Appearance and Reality,* 2d Edition, p. 435): "We must insist that every act is a resultant from psychical conditions. . . . Considered either theoretically or practically, 'Free Will' is, in

short, a mere lingering chimera. . . . This doctrine may in philosophy be considered as obsolete, though it will continue to flourish in popular ethics. . . . The popular moralist will always exist by not knowing what he means." If that is the only alternative, God grant that he may!

Does this not amount to saying that if I should turn bandit and hold up a payroll messenger, steal the roll and incidentally kill the messenger, my defense should be that my act was the result of "psychical conditions" and was, therefore, unvetoable by me? My want of money was the responsible source of my conduct. I had no free will, vulgarly so-called, and could not restrain or reverse myself. What right, then, would society have to object to my acting in this way or to punish me? The only logical Determinist is the Russian Nihilist, who takes exactly this position in both theory and practice. If I want to kill you, it is my privilege to do so, and in fact I really can't help doing it! This is the terminal stop to which Materialism, Determinism, and all the purely mechanical philosophies bring us. If a man denies the existence of God, that is, denies the existence of true Personality, no room is left for morality by or for him.

When a philosophy that has gone to one extreme is found to be untenable, the natural tendency is for the pendulum to swing to the other extreme. A good example is the blind revolt of the popular mind in the days when materialism held sway in the scientific world resulting in the wide spread of such cults as Christian Science and New Thought, which deny the existence of matter altogether. According to this other extreme point of view, soul or mind is the only reality

and matter is the creation of mind, is in a sense imaginary or an illusion. The Idealist holds that though the waves may break, there is no sound unless there is an ear to hear. He goes further and maintains that unless there is a mind to conceive, there is no wind to blow and there are no waves to break. To the Idealist who believes in God the world exists only in the mind of God.

This point of view is infinitely superior in theory and certainly in practice to the material and mechanical explanations which we have been considering, for it leaves room for morality, for personality, for the spiritual life of God and man. The recent discoveries in chemistry and physics which have led to the scientific hypothesis that matter is a phase of energy and that in the last analysis matter does not exist has given to the Christian Scientist and the devotee of the New Thought an excellent opportunity to say, "I told you so." If these are the only two alternatives, they have certainly much the better of the argument.

There is, however, a third point of view, known as Monism, which regards soul as one phase of substance of which matter is the other. Monism and Idealism are not so different from each other as both are radically opposed to Materialism and the various mechanical theories. But Monism lends more of an air of practical reality to the phenomena with which science has to do and on the whole the recent trend of thought and discovery among physicists lends support to this view.

Dr. J. A. Thomson in his *System of Animate Nature,* perhaps the best standard work on the subject to-day from the pen of a biologist and physicist (*Gif-*

ford Lectures, 1920, Vol. I, pp. 133-140), says: "Chemically considered, the organism is of a piece with its surroundings (though very much more complex than any mere thing); it may be usefully studied by chemical methods; it exhibits many chemical processes which can be studied in isolation. Similarly many well-known physical processes occur in the living body, and there is in its activity no known contradiction to the law of the conservation of energy. . . . If we consider the everyday functions of the body, we find that there has not been given any chemico-physical description of any total vital operation, such as the contraction of a muscle. We cannot satisfactorily describe in mechanical terms either the concatenation of events in a function or the correlation of one set of events with another set. This is still more marked when we consider animal behavior, with its coördination of acts in an effective series. . . . The conclusion is thus arrived at, that mechanical formulæ do not suffice for answering biological questions. . . . There is the domain of the inorganic, the physico-chemical order, where mechanism *perhaps* (italics mine) has it all its own way. There is the realm of organisms, the biological order, where mechanism is checkmated by organism. There is the kingdom of man, the social order, where mechanism is transcended and personality reigns."

As Dr. Thomson speaks from the point of view of the biologist, Mr. Howard V. Knox of Oxford University expresses the same thought from the point of view of Philosophy.[1]

"If the chain of physical 'necessity,' as known to us, is *not* complete; if the world of the physicist is *not*

[1] *Hibbert Journal,* July, 1922, p. 719.

demonstrably a self-sufficing, closed 'system'; then physical 'necessity,' as such, is *not* demonstrably absolute. In that case, the bottom falls out of the deterministic argument from the absolute 'necessity' of the physical world to the absolute 'necessity' of the world of mind—quite apart from the intrinsically self-contradictory nature of the conclusion. There remains, on the contrary, room for another principle than that of 'necessity,' and for an alternative method of explanation. Mind conceived as the vehicle of purpose is such a principle." This is exactly the idea that I have been trying to express in simple, everyday language.

With this light of recent opinion against the material and mechanical explanations of life, we return to a consideration of our alternatives, Idealism,—that all is mind, and what we have called Monism,—the one final Reality, with two aspects, mind and energy.[2]

Of Idealism Dr. Thomson says:[3]

"Also to be rejected is subjective idealism, which is the extreme antithesis of epiphenomenalism (the teaching of Huxley and the early evolutionists), and finds nothing real but the routine of personal conscious expe-

[2] Dr. Thomson in his chapter on, "The Problem of Body and Mind," deals at length with seven distinct theories. The three which we have mentioned, Materialism, Idealism, and Monism, seem in a larger sense to cover the ground and for our purposes are sufficient, but we might mention a fourth, which he calls the "Soul Theory." This as stated by him is distinctly dualistic,—the soul is distinct and separate from the body and continues to exist without a body after the dissolution of the material elements. This is not the true Christian soul theory, it is certainly opposed to the teachings of St. Paul, as we shall have an opportunity to see later, though it is a doctrine held by a large part of the Christian Church to-day, borrowed by it from Oriental Dualism.

[3] *The System of Animate Nature*, Vol. I, p. 239.

rience. This amounts to a denial of the existence of the physical world and of the possibility of science." Coming to Monism, which he calls the two-aspect theory, Professor Thomson says: [4]

"There remains a view to which biological facts incline us, 'the two-aspect theory,' or the 'Identity Hypothesis,' or the 'Correlation Theory.' We think of the organism as one, as, while it lives, an indissoluble psycho-physical being. The mind and the body are both abstractions, very convenient for purposes of discourse; there is but one reality, the life of the organism, which has a subjective aspect known as psychosis and an objective aspect known as neurosis. The living creature gives an account of itself in two ways. It can know itself as something extended and intricately built up, burning away, moving, throbbing; it can also know itself as the seat of sensations, perceptions, feelings, wishes, thoughts. But there is not one process, thinking, and another process, cerebral metabolism; there is a psycho-physical life—a reality which we know under two aspects. This view may be associated with the names of Aristotle, Spinoza, Fechner, Ebinghaus, and Lloyd Morgan."

He further quotes Bain: "The line of causal sequence is not mind causing body, and body causing mind, but mind-body giving birth to mind-body." This is like the old question, "Which was first, the hen or the egg?" the answer being neither. Samuel Butler, the old Christian philosopher, said almost the same thing, and is so quoted by Thomson: "The idea of a soul, or that unknown something for which the word 'soul' is our hieroglyphic, and the idea of living organism unite so

[4] *The System of Animate Nature*, Vol. I, p. 247.

spontaneously and stick together so inseparably, that no matter how often we sunder them they will elude our vigilance and come together, like true lovers, in spite of us."

Thus we have in the theory of Monism, or the "two-aspect theory," a hypothesis which is satisfactory to the greatest philosophers, ancient and modern, and to the best of modern scientists, in fact it is their own theory, and it allows for the existence of soul and the play of personality. To the question which students are sure to ask at this point, "Where does soul begin? Do human beings only have souls, or do dogs have souls too?" Monism gives the answer that all animate life has soul. Even the one-celled amœba goes a-hunting, he shows rudimentary intelligence, choice, and reasoning power. This is animal soul. It differs from the individual human soul or spirit in degree of development. We have self-consciousness which makes of the human soul a separate individual spirit. We can't get inside of the amœba and experience how he feels or thinks. That would probably be the only way we could ever find out how much of a soul an amœba has. But our reason leads us to suppose, from the way the amœba is reproduced by mere cell-division, and from the very rudimentary form of intelligence which he displays, that he is not self-conscious, that he has not a soul, but only soul. Stated in religious terms, we can believe that the divine life is manifested in every living creature, from the lowest to the most highly developed, but that human beings, having self-conscious personalities, have individual, autonomous souls; though how far down in the animal scale this individuality and self-consciousness of the soul may go we cannot say.

But there are those who would even go further in holding that no definite line can be drawn between the animal soul displayed in the simpler forms of animal life and the strange, uncanny wisdom that plants show in adapting themselves to their environment and opportunities for self-improvement. And again, though there is a gap between the living and non-living which is not apparent between plant and animal life, they would maintain with much show of reason that this same wisdom and power of self-arrangement is to be found in non-living matter. We find it in the stellar and solar systems of the heavens, all arranged and operating in their order; we find it in the marvels of geology and physical geography in our own world, the currents of ocean, and air, and of the magnetic poles; the action of volcanoes, glaciers, water-erosion, earthquakes, and frost; the beauties of crystalline formation and chemical reactions; the marvelous structure of matter revealed through the microscope and the X-ray, down to the millions of atoms in a teaspoonful of water, each atom a tiny solar system in itself, with its electrons relatively as far apart as the planets in the sky. Are we to say that there is no Divine wisdom in all this? Or that God, if there be a God, has finished it all and gone off and left it? Or rather shall we say that the transcendent God has everywhere become immanent in it all, vibrant, pulsating with ever-present power, carrying out everywhere an infinite divine purpose?

God dwells not apart from his world, but everywhere present in it. And whatever else we may think of a consciousness in other forms of life and throughout matter, we know that that consciousness has become

self-conscious, articulate, in the human soul, able somewhat to appreciate the manifold works of God, able to consider, compare, and remember them, able even to enter into the divine purpose and labor with God toward the perfection of his world. As we find this divine spirit becoming self-conscious and articulate in millions of God's children, we know, by the application of the principle that the effect cannot be greater than the cause, and by the universality of law, the unity of all creation, that God is self-conscious and articulate as the center of creation. I do not say that God is some*where,* for we ourselves are not some*where.* The human soul has no mass. It is not measured by length, breadth, or thickness. A man's soul is not larger or greater as primitive men believed when he grows fatter or taller, nor has one a larger soul because he has a larger brain. The soul is not in the brain. It is not any *where.* It comes to a focus in the brain, as the light focuses through a lens. Just so we cannot point to the sky, or here or there, and say God is there. As we were told when we were children, God is everywhere; and so in a sense are we; for the spirit of God or of man is not limited by time, place, mass, or direction.

As Zophar the Naamathite said to Job some thousands of years ago, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" (Job 11, 7.) And Job himself said, "Oh, that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat. I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. . . . Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him. On the left hand, where he doth work, but I

cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: but he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23.) Though they did not see him and could not find him out to perfection, they both knew that he was acquainted with them and all their ways, that he worked on the left hand and on the right, and that they were responsible to him. The answer to all the questioning of Zophar and Job, which they saw but dimly, we get as clearly as it can be given in human thought in the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. 2, 9-16), "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. . . . For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

It is true, as Zophar said, we cannot by searching know God to perfection, but he and the men of his times and we also can know something of God directly through our own souls, for the "spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." (Prov. 20, 27.) We are a faint glimmer of the divine Light. And, as St. Paul says,

spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. But when we have reached our limit and can of ourselves go no further, "we have the mind of Christ,"—"for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Thus the spiritual life is open to the soul of man Godward, and it seems with all this in view as though we, since we are spiritual beings, are better equipped to live in the spiritual realm and to deal with spiritual things than we are to live in the material realm and to deal with the finite phenomena that appear in time and space.

Yet it is true that we are also equipped to deal with material phenomena. We do so every day. We see, we feel, we touch, we taste, we hear, we smell, and we gather all these experiences into systems of thought. We even eat and assimilate the material elements and they go to build up our brain and nervous system, through which we communicate with the outside world. Here, indeed, is the great mystery, a far greater mystery than that we, spiritual beings, should know God who is a Spirit. Yet it is a fact, explain it as we may.

As Dr. Thomson [5] says, quoting Professor Stout: [6]

"When we come to the direct connection between a nervous process and a correlated conscious process, we find a complete solution of continuity. The two processes have no common factor. Their connection lies entirely outside our total knowledge of physical nature on the one hand, and of conscious process on the other." Professor Thomson, commenting on this statement, answers, "that the force of this difficulty is in the

[5] *The System of Animate Nature*, Vol. I, p. 243.
[6] *Manual of Psychology*, Chap. III.

assumption that the two series are *absolutely* disparate, an assumption which the undeniable correspondence between the two series disproves." We have seen already how Professor Thomson accounts for this connection on the two-aspect theory of Monism, according to which there is but one reality, Life, with a subjective aspect, spirit, and another objective aspect, neurosis, or nerve-action. We cannot as yet understand and we may never be able to understand fully how this interaction takes place. Sufficient the fact that it does take place, and that we have explained the fact as fully and as truthfully as we can. In final proof that this is a reasonable explanation, Professor Thomson tells us that we have the analogy of "thought itself, which is subjective and objective at once."

"But," you may ask, "what about the reports that biologists such as Professor Jacques Loeb have artificially fertilized frog's eggs so that frogs have hatched? And further that they have taken various combinations of salts and alcohol and produced tiny living creatures? Have such creatures animal soul? Do not these experiments vitiate your theory?" The fact is that Darwin's pronouncement still holds good, that we know of no instance where life has originated from non-living matter. Professor Loeb had living matter in his frog's eggs before he began the process of artificial fertilization; moreover the frogs thus produced were sterile and could not reproduce themselves. As for the synthetic animalculæ, they were not in reality organisms. They had chemical properties which for a time produced energy; they could not eat and so replenish that energy; they could not reproduce themselves. They soon were exhausted and were dissolved into the elements from

which they came. This is what we would have expected where the life principle or animal soul was lacking. But even if the biologist should succeed in producing animal life from non-living matter and that animal life should succeed in reproducing itself, it would not force us to make any change in our fundamental position. For what we are here maintaining is a creation to every part of which God is immanent. The scientist cannot get hold of any chemical elements to work with which God had not created and in which the Divine dynamic,—the power of God,—was not present. The only way that he could disprove this position of ours would be by making his living organism out of nothing—in doing this he would at the same time destroy the foundations of his own science.

The idea of God as immanent to all creation is what Augustine meant when he said, "If God should cease to think his thoughts for a single instant, the world would cease to be." The modern equivalent of that expression is that in all our experiences of life, "we are thinking God's thoughts over after him." This is fundamentally the same as Professor Thomson means when he says that, "Thought is subjective and objective at once." All this was difficult to grasp before the discoveries of the X-ray, radio activity, the electron, and the dynamic theory of matter,—no wonder Augustine once exclaimed, "Credo quia impossible est," "I believe because it is impossible." But for us most of the difficulties have cleared away, solid matter has been resolved into the revolving electron, without mass, in essence energy. This has now been demonstrated by science and it is but a short step for us to the belief that that energy, though we cannot fully explain how it is done, can in

our mental processes express itself both subjectively and objectively as thought on the one hand and neurosis or nerve-force on the other.

"Pure pantheism," some one exclaims. We plead guilty to the charge of pantheism. For we believe that God is All and in All, and we believe that this is the evident teaching of pure Christianity. But pure pantheism, no,—for the pantheism of the ancient religions taught a sort of shadowy divinity in all things without any ultimate personality to either God or man, whereas we have all along been maintaining the most vibrant and vital personality for both God and man. And to the old charge of orthodoxy that evolution left no room for the origin of the human soul, we admit that this was true of the materialistic evolution of Darwin and Huxley, but much that was inaccurate in their theories has been discarded, while that which was true has remained and must remain true. The conception of evolution which we have pictured here not only allows for the soul of man, it greatly magnifies that idea. It gives a higher, more truly divine conception of soul for the members of our race, and extends a belief in the divine essence of soul to all "animate" life.

CHAPTER 5

THE IDEA OF THE TRINITY

We have been considering the idea of a personal God, the divinity of Christ as perfectly reflecting the divine Nature, and the spirit of God in man. Perhaps the Christian idea of the Trinity has already been made sufficiently clear, but for those who still have difficulty with that conception a brief discussion may here be worth while. I can remember in my own reconstruction period how I struggled with the idea of three Gods and at the same time one God. It seemed on its face a contradiction in terms,—impossible, and sometimes I leaned to one side, and then I clung to the other, but how to bring the two, or shall I say the three, together I could not see. And I verily believe that to-day the majority of Christian people are tritheists rather than monotheists. They believe in one God, the Father, the Creator of all, and call themselves monotheists, but they believe also in the divine Christ and the Holy Spirit as "persons," separate entities, and so in reality are tritheists. They think in material terms, they do not know how to think in any other, and these "persons" are as real and separate to them as the bronze idols—one, two, three, in a row—in a Buddhist temple.

It was this wooden sort of thinking and its resultant tritheism that led to the outbreak of the Unitarian revolt

a century ago. The Unitarians themselves thought in equally rigid terms, and being unable to conceive of "three persons and one God forever," they simply asserted their belief in the one God, and denied the divinity of Christ and the reality of the Holy Spirit. And by this denial they lost much of the fervor, the missionary enthusiasm, the power and joy of dynamic Christianity. Yet many self-styled Unitarians to-day have come to think in truly spiritual terms, and like Dr. L. P. Jacks, the great leader of English Unitarianism, they see in Christ more than a good, a very good, man, and in the divine life of man they find more than the cold, bare morality of their dissenting fathers. Further I may suggest, as has been pointed out by Dr. Martineau in a recent number of the *Hibbert Journal* (January, 1922) that it was not the God, the first Person of the Trinity, that the Unitarians worshiped as their one God, but rather the one God of Unitarianism coincided with the larger aspects of the Christ of St. Paul and of St. John's Gospel and of the Christian creeds. This may be a rather hard idea to grasp on first thought, but I think it will become perfectly clear as the discussion in this chapter progresses.

The real point is for us to get away from our wooden and materialistic thinking molds, and to remember that we are dealing with spiritual, that is *in*-finite rather than finite realities. We have already had an example of this sort of thinking and an excellent analogy in our discussion of body, mind, and spirit in the human individual. We can all agree without difficulty that you and I are entities. There is only one of you and only one of me. Yet we have already considered our human personality from the point of view of a unity, a duality,

a trinity, and even a quadrupality. Our personality is one, yet according to the theory of Monism it manifests itself in a "subjective aspect known as psychosis and an objective aspect known as neurosis." From a different point of view we can consider ourselves as a unity manifesting itself in the trinity of soul, mind, and brain. Or we can even consider ourselves as having four aspects, if we add our spirits as related to the divine Spirit of God, in addition to the three aspects of soul, mind, and brain or body. There might conceivably be even more aspects of human personality brought into such a common and homogeneous series. It is as if one should consider a single individual as an individual, as the father of the family, as a citizen of a particular state, and as president of the United States. This I remember was an illustration that occurred to me when I was trying to think the problem out for myself and that helped me a step forward in my thinking.

But the thought that finally helped me to clear up the whole matter I found in an article by Professor Keyser of the mathematics department of Columbia University which I came across some ten years ago, entitled, I think, "Mathematics and Theology." In this article Professor Keyser pointed out that in dealing with spiritual questions we are not dealing with finite quantities where two and two equal four, or one plus one plus one equals three. Rather we are dealing with infinities, in which the ordinary rules of arithmetic do not hold. In the higher mathematics infinity plus one is still infinity. And three times infinity is infinity. In dealing with the things of the Spirit, the Spirit of man or of God, it is these categories that hold. There are

no boundaries to infinities and there is no measure to the infinite Spirit of God. Just as we have seen that the human personality, which is one, can be considered in various aspects, so the divine Personality has become known to us in much the same series of aspects which we call the "Trinity." We do not believe in three Gods but in one God. Philosophy often considers deity from the point of view of two aspects; we might think of Him conveniently in four or even more aspects, but it is always one and the same God. And Christian belief has settled upon its three aspects of God as best representing the divine Personality as we know him.

Starting with the idea of one God for the *uni*-verse, philosophy considers the two categories of the Transcendent and the Immanent Deity. The Transcendent Deity is the total, limitless, infinite God, who transcends our powers of comprehension. Yet we do in some small measure know God, for we find that he has partly expressed himself in all creation, in life about us, and in us; and that manifestation of the divine nature in creation philosophy calls the "Immanent Deity." It is, as we have already said, like the relation of the bay to the limitless ocean beyond.

The idea of the Trinity as developed by St. John's gospel and in the writings of St. Paul does not altogether agree with this dual conception of philosophy, though the difference is not irreconcilable. Jesus starts with the idea of God as our Father, by which he means all that philosophy means by the Transcendent Deity and more. For fatherhood includes creation and loving care,—God as immanent and personal in all human affairs. The second person of the Christian Trinity is the Son, the divine Personality as once com-

pletely and perfectly expressed in the historic person of Jesus of Nazareth. The third person of the Trinity is called the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, to use the old English expression now almost obsolete, whom Jesus also speaks of as "the Spirit of Truth," and the "Comforter."

The Holy Spirit is spoken of from two points of view. In general I may say that for both the Old and the New Testament the Holy Spirit is "the Light which lighteth every man coming into the world." For example, we find in Psalm 51, 10: "Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me," and numerous like passages. But the Holy Spirit is also spoken of as a special manifestation of the Divine presence which was to follow the departure of Jesus' bodily presence from amongst us. This we will have cause to consider further in the latter part of this chapter.

First, however, let us take up briefly the relation of Christ to the philosophical idea of Immanent Deity. And in doing so let us remember two things. First that Jesus was not teaching philosophy and rhetoric. Rather he was teaching religion. He was trying to make God real to the human mind and heart of the ignorant as well as the learned, both by example and by teaching. For him God as a living, loving Father, revealing himself fully in his Son, and dwelling with all who would recognize him as a Father,—this was sufficient. And second let us remember that we cannot set definite boundaries to spiritual realities. Words are finite and are at best clumsy tools. They can express spiritual truth only symbolically and approximately.

St. Paul was a philosopher and a great philosopher,

but he was a still greater religious teacher. For him the three categories of the Divine Personality, as used by Jesus, were sufficient. He did not, so far as I am aware, attempt to fully harmonize the religion which he taught with the current philosophy of the Greeks. To Paul, Jesus was the living Christ, whom he met on the way to Damascus, and the Holy Spirit was a practical reality, guiding his own life and manifesting itself in the lives of others who fully accepted the Gospel. The writer of St. John's Gospel and the Johannine epistles, on the other hand, whether St. John himself or some of his disciples, writing after Christianity had spread widely among the Greeks, found himself under the necessity of dealing with their philosophical point of view. His doctrine he found ready to hand in the writings of Philo, a Jew, who had already been trying to harmonize Jewish religion and Greek thought. Philo had identified the Greek concept of the "Logos,"—"word or reason," with the Hebrew idea of the "Word" which God spake when he created the world. This idea of the creative word or creative reason common to both Greek and Hebrew, which we might better understand by thinking of it as creative *thought,* is fundamentally the same as the modern idea of the "Immanent Deity,"—God as self-expressed in creation. The writer of the fourth Gospel in his introduction boldly identifies Christ with the Immanent Deity, the creative Reason or Word of God. In John 1, 1-15, we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the

light of men. . . . That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. . . . And of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

Thus we see that John identifies the Spirit of Jesus Christ with the Creative Word or Logos, that is, with the Immanent Deity of philosophy. In harmony with this identification he quotes Jesus as saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and again, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" We find support for this idea in St. Matthew's Gospel (11, 27), "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," and in other similar passages.

At first thought it is, to say the least, startling to be told that an obscure Jewish prophet who lived for a few years among men is the embodiment of the Creative Word of God, and of the Immanent Deity. But any honest reader of the New Testament will agree that this was the impression which the life of Jesus made upon his disciples, that they believed that he himself taught this as a fundamental part of his doctrine,—though not fully elaborated in philosophical terms,—and that they were ready to stake their lives upon this

faith. Though variously expressed, and sometimes very blunderingly, this has been essentially the faith of Christendom ever since. For example, in a recent number of the *Hibbert Journal* (July, 1922, p. 779), Mr. T. R. Glover, a leading English theologian, is quoted as saying, "Apart from Jesus, God is little better than an abstract noun." And the same article quotes W. S. Lilley, a Roman Catholic writer, as follows: "For all practical purposes, 'God' means the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

To show what a live question this is in present-day thought, I quote the following from an article by Dr. George Jackson, of Didsbury College, Manchester, in the same number of the same magazine (*Hibbert Journal,* July, 1922, p. 624): "To know God we must look at Jesus; we must interpret the unseen and unknown God in terms of the seen and known Christ. He that hath seen him, hath seen the Father. . . . The first great word in the Christian vocabulary is not God, it is Christ. Whatever knowledge of God we have, whether as Father or as Holy Spirit, whatever experience of his love or fellowship, is ours only through the grace of Christ."

Looking at the life of Christ from the perspective of history in this the year of Our Lord 1924 (note the expression year of Our Lord, which is now practically universal in both Christian and non-Christian countries), does this claim for him seem unreasonable? No other life has ever had even approximately as great an influence in the advancement of humanity. No life of any man living to-day, in this day of great affairs, can be even remotely compared to his, nor would any sane man be willing to have his life compared on any

basis of equality with that of Jesus. Though he lived nineteen hundred years ago, his influence for good grows rather than diminishes, and the ideal set by him then still remains the distant ideal for the best of men. Most of us are not philosophers, but after a careful study of the facts or after a personal facing of his personality, we cannot say less than that "God was in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world unto himself." And if we go this far we can draw no hard and fast line between the divine Incarnation in him and the Creative Word of God in all creation. There is no difference in quality or degree, though some might make the distinction in extent. I for one can agree with the words of Dr. Jackson, already quoted, "Whatever knowledge of God I have is mine only through the grace of Christ." Beyond this I hardly find it worth while to question.

Further, however, some who accept the Johannine teaching of the Eternal Christ as the Son, the Incarnate Word of God, draw a sharp distinction between Jesus of Nazareth, the Galilean teacher, and the living Christ. Now this may be a useful category for hair-splitting arguments in theology or philosophy, and it may help the carefully trained logical mind over the seeming difficulty of identifying the Immanent Deity with *any* historical character, however surpassingly great, yet for all practical purposes it is a distinction without a difference. For my part, having once accepted Jesus Christ as the Image of the invisible God, further speculation and careful classification seem to be unnecessary.

There remains for us the consideration in this chapter of the question of the Holy Spirit. I find this one of the most puzzling conceptions to many of the stu-

dents and younger generation of to-day. For a great many otherwise good Christians the words have no meaning whatever. As a certain little girl said to her father, "Daddy, I can understand what you mean by the Father, and the Son, but I haven't any use for the Holy Ghost." Yet the words had a very vital meaning for the early Christians; they are among the most frequently used in the New Testament. They are used at least occasionally, as we have already seen, in the Old Testament, and several other equivalent expressions are also used quite frequently. Unless a content somewhat equal to its desert is put back into the expression "Holy Ghost" by modern Christians, I do not see how a vital Christianity can persist or religion exercise any real force in our modern life.

From examining the thought about the Holy Spirit in the Bible, a strong impression will be gained that the Spirit came first as a consciousness of the divine Presence in the lives of believers, and that the doctrine came afterwards as an explanation of the facts of its effectiveness. Moreover, it is certainly not worked out into any hard and fast system. I may say that the Holy Spirit (or the Spirit of the Lord God and other like expressions in the Old Testament) means in general the conscious Presence of the Divine in the life of any individual. In the Old Testament it is generally thought of as visiting especially and often intermittently chosen prophets and holy men, though even there we get glimmerings of the thought that all men are in a sense the children of the Most High, and therefore by inference access to his Spirit should be open to them. However, we may say that on the whole the Old Testament puts the emphasis on the religion of cere-

mony and ritual, while the New Testament emphasizes the religion of the Spirit. The coming of Jesus Christ seems above all on this testimony to have opened the closed springs of spiritual life. God had been an external presence and, therefore, dim and shadowy to all but a very few. As soon as the heart of a loving God was revealed by Jesus, suddenly there was a rush of spiritual power as if the floodgates had been opened and the pent-up spiritual waters released, for God had for the first time become to the multitude a powerfully friendly internal presence. The joy of the new believers knew no bounds; their faith also was irresistible. Despite the great odds against it by reason of the unfriendliness of the Roman Empire, of the heathen religions, of the bigotry of the Jewish system, the Gospel spread rapidly. Converts were made on every hand. Persecution only increased their zeal. For the high moral standards attained in the lives of the new believers set off in sharp contrast the evil, the selfishness, and the sordidness of the life around them. A great new force had come into the world when each new convert proved to the world by his changed habits that he had the actual divine Presence in his life, to guide him through difficulties and to strengthen him in trial and danger.

Jesus had promised on the night in which he was betrayed: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will

come unto you." They took that promise literally. It is indubitable history that the living Christ was a vivid reality to these early Christians and the exclamation of St. Paul was typical of their spirit at this time. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

We see from these few quotations out of many that neither Christ himself nor the early Christians drew any hard and fast distinctions between the Spirit of Christ, the Presence of Christ, or the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. It was an experience for which mere words were inadequate, and they had to select from the all too feeble words at their command and describe its revolutionarily beneficent power as best they could. The experience was the same in each case, whichever term they used; for they used the words interchangeably. In the passage just quoted, our Lord says, "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter," then in the very next breath he says, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come unto you." It was only later, as the transformed life ceased to be universal, then ceased to be the rule and became the exception as among us, that the Fathers, who prove by their wooden thinking that they had never experienced the glorious thing with which they profess to deal, drew the sharp distinctions between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit which amount to a practical tritheism.

The early Christians were, as Dr. Jackson says in the article already quoted:[1] "at the stage of experi-

[1] *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1922, p. 623.

ence rather than of definition. Definition came later, and sometimes, unhappily, we have allowed definitions, framed with the help of intellectual conceptions which are no longer ours, to come between us and the experience they were meant to convey. But in the New Testament, experience of the Holy Spirit has not, as yet, crystallized. The language is everywhere fluid and mobile. The very variety of terms under which the Divine Spirit is referred to,—*the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit,* and *the Spirit* simply,—is typical of the fluidity both of thought and expression which characterizes the New Testament throughout. What is essentially the same experience is described, sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, so that it is quite impossible to reduce their words to the harmony of a logical and self-consistent whole."

We really need to get away from the hard and fast definitions of theology, back to the enthusiasm, the faith, and the expectancy of the early Church. We need to feel the possibility and the desirability of the experience of God as a powerfully friendly internal presence, whether we ascribe it to the Spirit of God, the Living Christ, or the Holy Spirit, for they are all one and the same thing. And we need to realize that the power of the early Church lay solely in the conquered and conquering sense of the Presence of the Living God in the lives of the individual Christians which, on their own testimony, was the work of the Holy Spirit.

Far more Christians to-day have had such an experience than is commonly thought, as one learns from the investigations of William James and Professor Star-

buck. For many who have had such experiences find them too sacred to talk about; the number is legion to whom what they said would be words and words spoken in an unknown tongue. Yet to those who have passed through an experience of the Spirit of God in their lives, it is more real, more authoritative and more effective as a character builder than any material thing or any human relationship.

As for myself, if one may so far lay aside the conventions as to speak of such things, my first experience of this sort came to me as a child of eleven. I had been brought up in a deeply religious and orthodox Protestant home. I had recently joined the Church, but there had been for me no special sense of the Divine Presence. I was slightly unwell one evening and had gone to bed early and my mother was reading aloud to me from David Copperfield. While I was conscious of what she was reading, I was following a train of thought of my own. I was thinking of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. It was all as vivid to my mind's eye as if I had been one of his little band of followers. I said to myself, "If St. Paul had such an experience in becoming a Christian, why haven't I? I wonder if I am really a Christian after all?" Suddenly I seemed to be transported to the edge of a great chasm,—the brink of Eternity it seemed to me, and a voice seemed to say to me, "You can pass over now to the eternal life, or you can stay and be a missionary of the Gospel." I cannot remember that I was frightened at all or that I had any particular desire to stay rather than go. But I answered joyously, "I will stay and I will do whatever you want me to do." I spoke to my mother and tried to tell her what had happened. She

felt my forehead and found that a high temperature had suddenly come on. The old family doctor was sent for, but the fever had subsided by the time that he arrived. The next day I was practically well again, but the experience through which I had passed was even then more vivid to me than any memory of every-day life. And from that moment I always felt that I knew what was meant by the "Holy Spirit," or the "Spirit of God."

Years passed, but my vision never faded. It remained the guiding star of my life. I traveled widely and saw something of the world on both sides of the Atlantic. I entered college and began to shape my course for the ministry. Ambition, love, the arguments of my friends, all tended to turn me aside from my purpose. But I do not believe there was ever a single moment when I seriously considered giving up. Sometimes opposition and obstacles made the struggle hard and exceedingly bitter; occasionally I was refreshed at a critical time by other like experiences. The difficult time came when I was forced to reconstruct my religious thinking, owing to my study of science and the modern point of view brought out in my theological studies. For I had been brought up in the simplest of old-fashioned orthodox faiths. I had been taught that to deny a single word of the Bible in its most literal meaning was to deny all and be eternally damned. If ever a doctrine was pernicious, that is the one, for it has wrecked the faith of thousands of honest, earnest, noble Christians of our generation who were seeking only the truth. I lived through several years of misery, acquiring all the time more knowledge of the newer forms of thought, becoming ever more dissatisfied

with the older forms of opinion, until finally I said to myself, "If the kind of God I have to believe in would condemn a man for not believing what he cannot and what he is unwilling to callous his whole nature to accept, then I had rather be damned. But that is not the kind of God that Jesus taught, for he taught a loving Father, who will have all men to be saved. I started out in all sincerity to prepare myself to teach the Gospel. I have always tried to be true to the vision and to follow his guidance. If in following his bidding, I have been led to express faith in new and different forms of thought and language, that frees me from the bondage which the old dogmas have become and leads me out into a glorious new liberty, where I can follow my conscience and my reason both, then that must be the sort of Gospel he wants me to accept and to teach." Thus at last I found peace and satisfaction and my religion became a joy to me again. And throughout all these years of struggle and preparation, in doubt and intellectual difficulty as well as under the onslaught of ambition and self-interest, it was my own experiences of the powerfully friendly internal Divine Presence, particularly the first, that held me true to my purpose. Otherwise again and again I would have been baffled and turned aside. Is it any wonder, then, after such experiences, that the presence of the Holy Spirit or a distinct sense of the divine reality in one's own bosom seems so important to me?

The attempts at a scientific explanation of such experiences have long interested me and I have done all I could to arrive at an explanation of the phenomena, that would not do violence to reason or run counter to any known fact of science. A tentative explanation

has been arrived at by psychologists of the school of William James. The factors of this explanation are in harmony with reason; they leave room for the fullest communion between God and man, they account for the phenomena and do not contravene any known facts, while the opposing theory simply denies the facts, and this can hardly be called a scientific attitude of mind. This whole matter, however, of the psychology of religious experience we will take up in our next chapter.

First, however, a few words as to the way of approach to such religious experience. Jesus said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." It is true that we cannot lay down any fixed rules that will guarantee such an experience. Sometimes men living in the most flagrant sin and living, also, in a state of bitter civil rebellion against it, like St. Augustine, suddenly see a vision that gives them permanent victory and alters the whole course of their lives. Seek and ye shall find and look for the finding to be a surprise is about all that can be said.

Such a faith as this blind or half-blind search demands is in no wise inconsistent with the scientific attitude of mind. It is rather a prerequisite of all scientific research. For the scientist must believe that he has a fighting chance to win; that the environment with which he is engaged in the business of research will answer the questions he puts to it correctly, and that if he will stick it out the light of illumination will break through his darkness. The Master, we may be sure, does not ask us to seek the non-existent nor to believe anything contrary to the reason and the senses which

God has given us. In the last analysis the religious and the scientific attitude of mind should be identical, —an honest seeking. And unless the facts that both religion and science reveal are mutually consistent, we have not found the truth and we must go back, and reëxamine both our science and our religion, and revise our findings. It is with this attitude of mind that we approach our consideration of the psychology of religious experience.

CHAPTER 6

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

THERE are two main schools of psychologists,—those who believe in the reality of the spirit in real personal agents, and those who do not. To the former, the spirit or soul is the ultimate reality, or, as we have seen, spirit is one phase of reality of which matter is the other. The other class would have been known a few years back as the school of Materialism, but owing to the recent discoveries in the field of physics and chemistry, which have shown that matter is not a solid reality after all but only a phase of energy, they have been forced to shift their ground and they now style themselves the school of Behaviorism. To these latter personality is not an agent self-directing, willing, thinking, and steering its own course, but only a series of chemical reactions of the kind produced with a retort and a test tube in the laboratory.

Many of the leading psychologists of the day belong to this school of Behaviorism. To the lay mind it is a strange and anomalous condition to find a psychologist (*pseuk-ol-ogist*) without a *pseuke*. This position would force upon us a whole series of further anomalies, which we scarcely have words to express, such as thoughtless thought, lifeless life, choiceless choice,

moral-less morality. And it is further strange when the leading biologists, physicists, and chemists are seeking a spiritual interpretation of the universe, that is, coming back to the Christian position which they were the first to discard for a now discredited Materialism, that so many psychologists, those who make a study of the spirit *par excellence,* proceed on the assumption that spirit is no part of man's make-up whatsoever.

It is they who, as we have said, believe that if you tear down man's physical house, you find dust unto dust and ashes to ashes, but no spirit to the God who gave it, because there is no Spirit and no God to whom to give it. For them there is no God, hence there can be no spirit. For them Reality is composed only of Matter and Energy, phenomena under the governance of inexorable law. When confronted with the phenomena of personality, such as reason, choice, and morality,—and the emotions of love, joy, and peace—they reply that these phenomena are not real psychical experiences. They are "psycho-chemical" reactions (whatever that may be), each the most recent link in a long chain of predetermining causes. Thus they are absolute fatalists. Even chance is governed by the law of averages.

Now we are ready to admit without being pressed that many of these men are careful scientists, excellent "psychologists," though the term itself is certainly a misnomer to be attached to those who do not believe in the existence of spirit, and we gladly accept all the actual *positive* findings made by them in their experiments in the laboratory. But the larger half will always be missing in any psychology that comes wholly out of the laboratory. It may be doubted whether psychology

will ever be reduced to the exactness of certain of the other exact sciences. In this it is like Biology. In both the element of individuality and personality, *i.e., the spirit,* enters in. We may therefore at the present time even question some of what are claimed to be the positive findings of any Psychology that tries to get along without a seat of agency in the human constitution. When it comes to the negative assertions of certain so-called psychologists, that this or that psychic experience is unreal or imaginary, there we part company with them with a good conscience. The fact that they have been unable to reproduce telepathy, for example, under the conditions of the laboratory, does not prove that telepathy is impossible or even that instances of it are not common in everyday experience. It simply proves that the methods of observation thus far employed by them have failed to register what common experience indicates is a phenomenon of human personality.

It may help us to understand the strange phenomenon of a psychology (*pseukology*) without any "*pseuke,*" when we remember that science is not philosophy. It is the task of the scientist to tabulate the phenomena which he finds by his own particular methods of search, to arrange them as far as possible in series showing their relationships, and to formulate what regular sequences he can among them. To that extent we must perforce accept the findings of the scientist. To that extent, also, it is a matter of the first importance for our present discussion to remind ourselves that the scientist has no dealings with ultimate realities. They belong to the field of philosophy and religion, in which the same man who is a scientist has the right to his opinion if he will turn to and become a philosopher or

a student of divinity; but his opinion as a scientist has no weight of authority outside of its own limited field. We cannot expect the psychologist as a psychologist to discover the ultimate nature of spirit, any more than we can expect the physicist to discover the ultimate nature of matter or the biologist to discover the final reality in life. The physicist tells us that he has reduced matter to energy or force, but when we take up the question of relating that energy to Ultimate Being, —to God if you will—we are in the realm of philosophy. The physicist is off his beat and has no authority; each one must choose his philosophy for himself. The biologist tells us that life has certain relationships to matter which corresponds to well-known chemical reactions, but that "there has not been given any chemico-physical description of any total vital operation." If the biologist, therefore, goes out of his field to fill that gap which his science cannot fill, we are interested in his opinion, but he does not speak with authority.

The Behavioristic psychologist, finding a certain chemico-physical relation between brain and mind, jumps at the conclusion that psychosis is chemical action, and he tells us that every thought and act of the human personality is a member of a closed causal nexus,—a temporary final link in a long chain of predetermining causes. In this he has not only strayed out of his territory into a realm in which he has no authority, but he is unscientific. For he speaks as a scientist and yet that complete causal nexus is an *ex cathedra* complete causal nexus. He has never described any complete set of causes leading up to any human thought. His knowledge of those causes, instead of being truly represented by a closed circle, is more

nearly represented by a segment of some thirty or sixty degrees. Yet many advocates of this Behavioristic theory presume to be dogmatic when they venture out of bounds into philosophy, but profess to be still talking science; more dogmatic than the dogmatic theologians of the past century who raised their wrath and ridicule.

In these days dogma is dead and the endeavor of the Behaviorists to resurrect it is a complete failure. We lay out all our facts and adopt the best hypothesis that we can develop to explain those facts. We are expected to give a reason for the faith that is in us. In so far as that faith seems reasonable to others they adopt it, and stand ready to adopt something better if they can find it. To me the only reasonable explanation for *all* the facts seems to require a living, personal God, "in whom we live and move and have our being," a God who directs all life by being actively present in it. I would go even further, though this is by no means so apparent, and say that, despite seemingly fixed laws, He seems to be present in and to direct the development of so-called inanimate nature.

"But," you may ask, "how does God direct affairs on earth? We believe today that the laws of nature are fixed. Does He break those laws on occasion? Or are there realms in which law does not hold?" Neither, it would seem to me. Rather would it seem that what He does, He does by and according to His laws, which are flexible enough to permit of the element of personality entering into the conduct of affairs, His and ours. Suppose you have a stony little New England farm, whose chief crop is weeds. That is its natural condition. But you can choose to gather up the stones to build houses and barns and fences. You can plow

the fields, turn under the weeds, fertilize the soil, plant good seeds and make that worthless farm into a beautiful and profitable home. You do not break any of the laws of nature and you do "create" another farm altogether. You do it by and according to God's laws. Are we to think that what we can do God cannot? God forbid! If God can put into the nature of man a mind to plan and a will to execute such a feat of new creation which does not involve the suspension or violation of existing law, surely He Himself can do as much and more than we can do, and so can exercise a guiding hand in the affairs of human life.

The result of this creative activity involving no suspension or violation of existing law on God's part or on ours whether in agriculture or in religion is progress. Both the individual and the race thus obtain better material and better spiritual conditions. In this way, previous progress makes succeeding progress possible. But progress that is maintained can never be the product of haphazard or of chance. Things do not progress of themselves. Progress requires thought, reason, and purpose. And it requires a degree of thought, reason, and purpose far transcending that of the amœba, or the savage, or even of our own unaided human powers. Progress of the sort that we see taking place around us every day and that has been going on for untold millions of years in the past requires the powers of the living God in all and through all and behind all.

Now what is evolution but another name for progress? Allowing all due credit for the marvelous *progress* made by the discoverers of the modern theory of scientific evolution, it is a signal instance of the way that previous progress paves the way to the next big

step forward. The idea of progressive development had long been recognized in spots. It had simply not been fully applied. It is interesting to note for example that the Chinese had believed for thousands of years that their ancestors lived in trees like the monkeys. Unfortunately for religion, its leaders thought that the theory of scientific evolution ran counter to some of their cherished beliefs and traditions and they opposed bitterly this great new discovery. As a matter of fact the principles of Christianity are fundamentally in harmony with the principles of evolution. Christ teaches that the kingdom of God will come by the progressive development in human society of better and yet better conditions ever more in harmony with the will and purpose of God. What is this but an evolution of the highest order, not the product of blind forces but with will and purpose, human and divine, behind it? It is strange that it took the Church half a century to recognize that which was really its own. I may even go so far as to say that Christianity is so fundamentally evolutionary that the theory of evolution as we apply it to-day to the whole universe and everything that goes on in it could scarcely have been discovered and formulated without the preparation for it contained in the teachings and dynamic provided by Jesus Christ.

It is equally unfortunate that the men of science who discovered evolution, after their excommunication by the purplind leaders of the organized Church, allowed themselves to be turned away from religion. But being incurably religious, they made for themselves a sort of impersonal God out of Evolution. They personified their theory and ascribed to it a being, an essence, a force and purpose which it by nature could not have.

They talked as though Evolution, in the guise of Natural Selection, were a purposeful force guiding life from its primitive condition of a one-celled amœba on the distant shores of time up through all the progressive stages to the present marvels of human life and society and on towards future perfection.

But again, what is Evolution? It is not any thing. It has neither being, form, nor substance. It is not reason nor force, nor energy. It can have no purpose nor final objective. It is simply a theory, a manner, a *way in which*. Evolution is the highway used by progress. It is a process of development. It is God's way of doing things. Evolution is the theory that the world grew and is still growing. This is in no wise opposed to Christianity. It is rather essentially Christian.

But the theory of Evolution, like everything else, not only grew but has grown since it was first outlined half a century ago. Darwin, marvelous as was his learning and his mental acumen, made a contribution, but only a contribution, toward the finished theory of the far future. He clearly indicates in his *Descent of Man* that he did not rule out a belief in a personal God and immortality. He was simply agnostic on these subjects. He had not gotten that far. Recent discoveries in biology, physics, and chemistry have all been on the side of a spiritual interpretation of natural phenomena, and have led many leading scientists to a practically Christian point of view. They see that divine Purpose is needed to explain how progress or evolution can take place.

It is interesting to note at this point that Darwin, in trying to account for the progressive development of society uses the expression "the inspiration of

genius." When an epoch-making idea came to humanity, like the use of fire, the best way to account for it, said he, was to explain it as due to the "inspiration of genius." Here was an open door Darwin might have entered and found within a great cathedral with an altar to the Living God. But he passed it by without looking in and went back to his laboratory.

Now "inspiration" means strictly "breathing in." One cannot breathe in without having something in the way of a reservoir of atmosphere to breathe in. One cannot be inspired with an idea or a thought except there be a source of inspiration from which that idea or thought came. We do not make something out of nothing. All the great inventions and discoveries of mankind must first have been "put in" before man could come along and "take them out." We are simply thinking over God's thoughts after him. God had already made the materials and established the laws of combustion. Man simply adapted them to his uses. The pump is modeled on the valves of the human heart. Alexander Bell, in inventing the telephone, dissected a corpse for the purpose, and modeled the drums of his telephone on the eardrum, using the electric current instead of the air cushion to carry the vibrations. Thus God has taught us and put progress within our reach.

It is easy for us to see this in the material realm. Though it may be more difficult to make it apparent, it is equally true in the realm of the social, the moral, and the spiritual. God put the emotions of love and sympathy,—apparatus by which to appreciate how other people feel,—into the human soul. They have not evolved out of nothing. They are God-given. God is Love, and we love him because he first loved us and

gave us the ability to love him in return. God has as surely shown us the way in moral and spiritual development as he has in material inventions.

Mankind muddle along much as they are and were, even sometimes slipping back a few steps, until some genius has an inspiration. Whence is this inspiration? How does inspiration work?

The Christian theory identifies inspiration with the presence and guidance of the divine spirit in the human heart. The fact is that most of the great geniuses have credited their achievement to the work of inspiration. "Not unto us" has been their cry. They have been men who have had visions, they "have seen the Lord high and lifted up," they have heard the angels sing:

> "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts:
> The whole earth is full of his glory."

The psycho-analysts would say that such men had a complex. The materialistic or Behavioristic psychologists declare that people who think they have communion with the divine are self-deceived and abnormal. As Professor Binet-Sanglee says in his *Les Prophètes Juifs* (p. 314), "Le prophète juif est donc avant tout un haluciné et un monomane, dont les propos sont parfois marquée au coin de la plus parfaite incoherence." [1] Now who is right? Do the accounts of their religious experiences by the Jewish prophets, and others, show that they were transactions with reality? Do they commune with the divine? Or are they hallucinated monomaniacs? I have looked as usual for a third

[1] The Jewish prophet is then above all hallucinated, a monomaniac whose idle talk is stamped with the utmost incoherence.

alternative, but I have found none. Forced, therefore, to choose between the two alternatives, I have no hesitancy in accepting the religious experiences of the prophets as real. For by their fruits ye shall know them. I cannot believe that the great spiritual leaders of the race, among whom we would have to include Moses, Amos and Isaiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, Paul, Augustine, Jeanne d'Arc, and a host of others, who have had religious experiences that were intensely real to them—in fact the vast majority of the human race, if we consider those who have been guided by prayer—are abnormal degenerates, as they are elsewhere styled by Binet-Sanglee, and hallucinated monomaniacs. The mechanistic psychologists are sound in their logic that a man who thinks he has an experience of something that does not otherwise exist than in his experience is an "haluciné." But they are thereby reduced to the absurdity of holding that the human race walks backwards like the crab, led by its lame ducks, its hallucinated monomaniacs made so by the "inspiration of genius." When they reduce to such an absurdity, can they not see that their premises must be wrong,—that there is a God and the experiences of these religious geniuses have been real?

"But," you say, "how does God communicate with man? How can man see God who is invisible? How can we hear his voice? What language does he speak? Did God speak ancient Hebrew with Moses, and Latin with Augustine, and French with Jeanne d'Arc?" The vast majority of the Christian churches in the world to-day hold their services in dead languages not understood by the people, seemingly on the theory that God understands only the language in which the religion

was first expressed. For example, the vast Russian church prays in old Slavonic, which is not now understood by the people or even by some of the priests; the millions of Buddhists in China pray their "Omita Buddha" in Sanskrit, though it is unintelligible to any but a few of the most educated priests.

I remember once in London reading the signs in front of a Yiddish theater. They were written in a combination of bad German and worse English, with an occasional Hebrew or Russian word thrown in, but all spelled out in the beautiful old Hebrew character. There was one word that I did not understand, so I asked a Jewish boy who was standing by its meaning. He told me and then went on to explain about the language. "Dot," he said, pointing to the sign, "vas Yiddish, vat we speak now. Den dere vas de old kind, ve call Yudish, vat Mushé (Moses) speak mit Gott mit, because Gott, he couldn't understand any odder kind."

Of course it is absurd to think that God speaks any particular language. For, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship in Spirit and in truth." That is, when we worship God, we do not worship him with words, but rather with our hearts, through the emotions of love, thanksgiving, and praise. We give them a body made of words, but it is the emotions themselves that reach the Throne of Grace. Words are expressions of objective reality. So when God speaks to us, he does not speak in words. Rather he speaks without a medium direct to our hearts and the longings, aspirations, sense of presence, of companionship, of guidance, of duty, which follow constitute what we "hear." To tell the experience to another we

have to "step it down" by our own mental machinery into words.

It is like the sending of a telegram. No words come over the wire, it is simply a succession of interrupted vibrations, which have to be transmuted into the sound of the clicking instrument or into dots and dashes and then into the written or spoken word before the message is complete. I remember an illustration of my old physics teacher which may be helpful. He told us of a young fellow who got into trouble and wired his father for help. The father wired back a hundred dollars credit. No bag of money came over the wire, but the son got the money.

Have we such a mental equipment for translating messages from the subjective to the objective? Have we anything corresponding to the electric current and the telegraph instrument? We have seen already [2] that thought is at once subjective and objective. A thought is certainly subjective at the moment of birth, but to give that thought any content, to make it more real and tangible even to ourselves, we must express it in either words or pictures, and they are objective. Our words may be spoken or unspoken; but we notice that when we think deeply we often find our lips moving involuntarily framing the corresponding words.

An artist has a great thought. He expresses it best to himself as a mental picture. He may also take brush and paints and express that picture on canvas. We stand where the light falls right upon it and we "see" the picture. It is purely objective, colored pigments laid roughly on the canvas. But its reflection through

[2] Thomson, *System of Animate Nature.*

the transmitting light waves falls on the retina of our eye; the optic nerve transmits it again to the brain, where that wondrous psycho-chemical process called "seeing" takes place. The picture is transmitted into thought, which is at once subjective and objective. We get the artist's message, which was originally subjective. Having seen the picture, our emotions are stirred and our life is affected.

This is an everyday example of the transmitting of subjective messages from one personality to another, through the human senses. We see the faces of others, we hear their words, we read their books, we feel their presence, we rejoice in their joys, we suffer their sorrows,—*sympathize* with them,—we think their thoughts. We believe in a God, who is Spirit like ourselves, a personal God, "in whom we live and move and have our being," and is it reasonable for us to think that we are shut off from him alone?

Every new thought or experience comes to us in terms of our previous experience. If you learn a new word, you picture it in terms of something you have already seen, or define it in terms of words that you already know. If you learn a new language, you learn it in terms of the language you already know, and only after it has been well learned will you be able to think entirely in the new language. So also, when we read a new book on science or religion, we build the new knowledge obtained into the knowledge that we already have. Every one of us can find books that we cannot understand because the gap between the new knowledge which they contain and our previous experience is too great. We cannot bridge it. We say, "That's all Greek to me." But to some one who happens to possess

knowledge to which that "Greek" can be joined on, it is accessible.

Thus it is that when God speaks to us, we can listen in only to that fringe just beyond our previous experience. The message employs no physical medium. For God is a Spirit, and so are we spirits. It establishes direct contact and when we formulate the experience it is in terms of love, of aspiration, of right and wrong, of duty, desire, and purpose. The message may be infinite, but our perception of it is limited by our present stature. We can take only one step forward at a time. "To him that hath, it shall be given." If we have not learned to love at all, we cannot receive a message in terms of a greater love. But if we have love, we can take one step forward toward an advanced recognition of that love. God is pure, and if our hearts are muddied with impurity, we are looking at the purity of God through muddied spectacles. The message comes clouded so that we get only the dimmest impression or none at all.

So, when Moses "saw" God on Mt. Sinai, or Isaiah saw him in the temple at Jerusalem, their seeing had to be done in terms of their own mental history, and they either saw him seated upon the thundercloud, or, like an Oriental monarch, seated upon a throne, high and lifted up, and they articulated his inarticulate message to them into audible words of ancient Hebrew for the benefit of the people. Thus it was that Augustine heard the angel speak to him in Latin, saying, "Tolle, lege, tolle, lege."

Now when one is visited by such a vision or hears such a command it possesses more reality to him than any solid material thing that he has ever come into

contact with,—it is more real than the chair that he barks his shins on in the dark. And it actually is more real because the realm in which it takes place is more significantly and permanently real than the material realm.

It is by the method of revelation outlined above, moreover, that we acquit God of blame for the slowness of religious progress and the inadequacy of early religious concepts. For, though there are no bounds to the message, our boundless ignorance sets the narrowest limits to the size portion of that message which we can take because the cure for our ignorance can only be administered in homeopathic doses. Administered in larger doses, we should not learn anything at all. For example, Moses knew the customs of his day, he was thoroughly familiar with the code of the Pharaohs, and perhaps also that of Hammurabi. These made it possible for him to translate the light and leading which he sought and obtained from Jehovah into the Ten Words. They are far higher laws of life than anything in existence on the earth at that time, are surpassed only by the summary of love given by Jesus Christ, and are in fact the basis of our common law in the civilized world to-day. On the principle "to every one according to his need," these beginners needed and, therefore, obtained, more detailed coaching from God than, perhaps, we do ourselves, just because more supernatural aid was required if they were ever going to succeed in spelling out the first words of the ethical and religious alphabet.

Of this same Moses, the Lawgiver, remember, it is said (Ex. 11, 1 ff.), "And the Lord said unto Moses, '. . . Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbor, and every woman of her

neighbor, jewels of silver and jewels of gold.'" And again (Exodus 8, 27), "We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as he shall command us." Now Moses had no intention of stopping with a three days' journey into the wilderness; he was deceiving Pharaoh, really lying to him, in order to get away. We need not be surprised at this early state of civilization to find Moses thus resorting to deception in his warfare with Pharaoh, with no sense of incongruity on his part or on the part of the writer of the account. But it is somewhat startling to find, in the former passage quoted, the actual command of God to Moses in a vision to tell the people to lie to the Egyptians and steal from them under the guise of borrowing their jewels of gold and their jewels of silver, for they had no intention of ever returning them. Plainly such a people would find the task of living up to the Mosaic laws of life as difficult to impossibility to them as we find the task of living up to the Sermon on the Mount.

It is important for us not to insist on a too literal theory of inspiration with the younger generation. They are trained in the laboratory and in the methods of modern scientific analysis. Their minds instantly seize the glaring imperfections in the moral point of view of Moses and other great teachers of early times. They detect the inconsistencies and a strict theory of verbal inspiration will not satisfy the demands of their minds for an explanation. I remember during my schooldays having a chum who was going through a period of storm and stress in his religious experience. He was a physical giant, a great football player, a fellow with a keen mind and an impulsive nature. He

had sowed his wild oats and had broken many of the Ten Commandments, but now he was earnestly seeking religious light and moral help from Christianity. Having little or no previous religious training, he naturally turned to the Bible for help. He began at the beginning and read Genesis and Exodus. He found that Abraham and Moses lied to the Pharaohs of their time, that Jacob deceived his father and later deceived his father-in-law, without reproof, but what completely upset him was the command of God to Joshua and the Hebrews to kill all the inhabitants of Canaan, men, women, and children, who had done them no harm, but whose land they wanted.

My friend came to me in his perplexity. We talked these things over again and again; once we talked almost the whole night through. I had been brought up in the most orthodox and literal fashion. I could not help him. All I could say at first was that he must accept and believe it all, as I had been taught to do myself. The net result for me was to set me thinking; for my friend it was nothing. He could not see his way through. His period of religious fervor passed. So far as I know he forsook religion altogether and went back to the old life. How I have wished that I might have understood these things better at that time myself, so as to have helped this friend to the light and consolation which he sought. I fear, however, that there are thousands of young men to-day in the same case. They cannot understand that God's revelation of himself to humanity is progressive,—far more so than the revelation which our school system makes to them from the day they enter the kindergarten to the day they graduate from the professional school.

It now remains for us to consider in further detail the question of the reality of such religious experiences as those we have been discussing. For there is a sharp question at issue between the Behavioristic or mechanistic school of psychologists on the one hand and theists and Christian thinkers on the other. Both sides to the controversy admit the fact of the visions and the experiences,—every one has to admit that much. History is full of accounts of such experiences and they are taking place to-day in the lives of millions of religious people. Differences crop out in the explanation of the facts. The Behaviorist takes it as an axiom that there is no God and no spiritual life, hence the experiences can have no reality behind them. Those who think they have such experiences, therefore, are self-deceived, hallucinated, degenerate. On the other hand, we who believe in a personal God find no very great difficulty in believing that there are ways open to God to communicate with his children. In explaining the apparent inconsistencies in the moral and spiritual point of view of messages which purport to have come from God, we are greatly helped, however, by an understanding of the fact that the variable in all such messages is in our capacity to receive and not in his disposition to impart.

It is certainly unfair in advance of a thorough study of both historical and current cases of religious vision to condemn all such communication with the Divine as imaginary. The first impartial studies of this sort from a scientific point of view were undertaken by Professors Starbuck and William James. Both have gone rather far in their conclusions based upon this purely scientific investigation in the favorable attitude taken

by them towards the reality of such experiences,—explained of course on the general basis which I have outlined. Professor William James, in his epoch-making studies, "The Varieties of Religious Experience," comes to this final conclusion in summing up his findings (p. 422):

"1. Mystical states, when well developed, usually are, and have the right to be, absolutely authoritative over the individuals to whom they come.

"2. No authority emanates from them which should make it a duty for those who stand outside of them to accept their revelations uncritically."

The statement, "Mystical states . . . have a right to be authoritative over the individuals to whom they come," means that after a wide if not exhaustive study of both the historical and the modern cases of religious experiences that have proved to be turning points in human lives, "mystical states" he calls them, Professor James is convinced of their reality. If they were the result or evidences of self-delusion, how could they have any authority? The qualification that others are right in taking a critical attitude toward such divine communications as far as applying them to their own lives and practice is concerned is simply due to the fact that God conducts no classes, does not deal with souls in the mass, but always gives individuals private tuition.

Yet in the aggregate Professor James and others who have subjected them to rigid objective tests find that they are responsible for a vast amount of that which is best in human life. Many of the outstanding leaders in human thought, especially in the fields of religion, morality, and art, have been hospitable to the

mystical states and have derived their inspiration from them. It is only those who ignore the very solid achievements of the mystics who would think of condemning them as madmen.

Professor James further states (p. 423), "Our own more 'rational' beliefs are based on evidence exactly similar in nature to that which mystics quote for theirs. Our senses, namely, have assured us of certain states of fact; but mystical experiences are as direct perceptions of fact for those who have them as any sensations ever were for us." When one of the world's leading psychologists and philosophers declares that "Mystical experiences are direct perceptions of fact," exactly all that rational Christians desire or claim for such experiences from the point of view of the Christian religion is admitted. It underwrites the reality of the soul and of its communication with the divine. This point of view Professor James further emphasizes, as a part of his personal belief rather than his distinctly scientific conclusion, in the following statement (p. 525): "Meanwhile the practical needs of religion seem to me to be sufficiently met by the belief that beyond each man and in a fashion continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and to his ideals." And again (p. 515 ff.): "Confining ourselves to what is common and generic we have in *the fact that the conscious person is continuous with a wider self through which saving experiences come*, a positive content of religious experience which, it seems to me, *is literally and objectively true as far as it goes*. . . . The further limits of our being plunge, it seems to me, into an altogether other dimension of existence from the sensible and merely 'understandable'

world. Name it the mystical region, or the supernatural region, whichever you choose. So far as our ideal impulses originate in this region (and most of them do originate in it, for we find them possessing us in a way for which we cannot articulately account), we belong to it in a more intimate sense than that in which we belong to the visible world, for we belong in the most intimate sense wherever our ideals belong. Yet the unseen region in question is not merely ideal, for it produces effects in the world. When we commune with it, work is actually done upon our finite personality, for we are turned into new men, and consequences in the way of conduct follow in the natural world upon our regenerative change. But that which produces effects within another reality must be termed a reality itself, so I feel as if we had no philosophic excuse for calling the unseen or mystical world unreal.

"God is the natural appellation, for us Christians at least, for the supreme reality, so I will call this higher part of the universe by the name of God. We and God have business with each other; and in opening ourselves to his influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled. The universe, at those parts of it which our personal being constitutes, takes a turn genuinely for the worse or for the better in proportion as each one of us fulfils or evades God's demands."

This is certainly sufficiently clear and definite. A minister of the Gospel could hardly be more explicit in the statement of his faith in God and in our power to communicate with him, though he might prefer Christ's portrayal of the nature of God to that of Professor James.

Our discussion has proceeded thus far without bringing up the much mooted question of telepathy at all. For our belief in God and in our power to commune with him is not in any sense dependent upon the settlement of the question of telepathy either *pro* or *con*. There are still many experimental psychologists who claim only negative results in regard to this power. On the other hand, if we are in direct communion on the hither side with a being continuous with ourselves whom we may call God, it would be only natural to expect that some direct means of communication with each other should be open to us (telepathy) in addition to the usual recognized means of communication. Again, the full scientific demonstration of telepathy would further strengthen the position of those who hold to the spiritual basis of life and afford better experimental facilities for studying the mystical states through which humanity holds communion with the divine.

For me, the principle of telepathy has been established by evidence sufficient to persuade any one who has not constitutionally made up his mind not to accept the facts. The members of the British Society for Psychical Research, many of them the leading scientists of Great Britain, took up this study without any bias whatever, unless it be a bias against spiritualistic phenomena, and they now as a body accept telepathy as an established fact. As long ago as 1893, Sir A. J. Balfour, then President, said in his address to the society,[3] "Not as a matter of speculation or conjecture, but as a matter of ascertained fact, there are many things in heaven and earth not hitherto dreamed of in

[3] Quoted in the *Outlines of Science*, Vol. III, p. 570.

our scientific philosophy." In the same article quoted,[4] Sir Oliver Lodge says, "One of the first fruits of the labors of the S. P. R., or rather of the pioneers who founded it, was the discovery of 'telepathy,' or thought-transference between mind and mind without the use apparently of *any of the known organs of sense*."

Many of the "things in heaven and earth not hitherto dreamed of," to which Sir A. J. Balfour referred as captured facts, have in the intervening years been further investigated, and, far from casting any doubt upon the reality of these phenomena, the investigations go to show that in the field of spiritual phenomena we may expect most extensive future discoveries of science.

[4] *Op. Cit.*, p. 571.

CHAPTER 7

PRAYER AND MIRACLES

On the kindred subjects of Prayer and Miracles we find perhaps the most sharply contrasted opinions in the thought of to-day. Those who in a general way may be classed together as "Conservatives" maintain that God can do anything,—there is no limit to his power. He could walk in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day, he could carve the Ten Commandments on two blocks of stone and hand them all completed to Moses, he could cause the sun and the moon to stand still for Joshua.

When confronted with the fact that such things do not happen now, and that students of modern science have observed and outlined so many regular sequences that they believe these to be the undeviating rule in the physical world, the conservatives hold that God made the laws, and that he can overrule them at will. They explain that in primitive times Jehovah needed to show his power by great physical miracles, as the only credentials that would be convincing to his people, and to protect and care for them also when they were not yet able to take care of themselves, but that since we have the fuller revelation of Christ we no longer need such miracles. That is the reason miracles practically ceased, they say, with the establishment of Christianity and the

death of the Apostles. Men have now learned how to take care of themselves, acquainted as they have become with the comparatively fixed order of nature without such supernatural assistance. But by the application of special faith in cases of special need, we can still persuade God to break his laws.

This was the explanation given to me by my Sunday-school teacher, when as a small boy I began to ask disconcerting questions. It was not altogether satisfactory then, and almost upset my faith; and it became increasingly unsatisfactory as the years passed. I find that it does not satisfy the younger generation of to-day, certainly not after the high school period, if they have been introduced to the laboratory and the scientific method. The church has been strangely backward in meeting their problem, and it is not the fault of our young people that so few of them are to be found in the Sunday school beyond the age of fifteen or sixteen. They are taught one thing in day school, and something quite inconsistent with it in Sunday school.

The reason for this inconsistency is quite apparent. The conservatives take the Bible as literally true in scientific as well as in religious matters. Yet the Bible is based upon the point of view that there is no fixed order in nature. Rather to the Bible writers, as to all people of their times, God (or the gods) was close kin to an Oriental emperor, and everything happened indifferently according to his whim or will. Yet the church of to-day has been forced to take over the point of view of science on many points. For example, the church has had to discard these beliefs of all people of Bible times: that the Earth was square and flat, with four corners, resting on pillars; that the sky was a solid

dome or vault, turned over us like a bowl; that God opened the windows of Heaven to let the rain come down, and after it had served our purposes it leaked through to the "waters under the earth."

But, you ask, if these documents contain things so patently bad science as the story of the Creation and of the sun standing still, what faith can we put in them? Isn't all they have to say equally swept away? And here let me say quite frankly that the conservatives of the church, by demanding that the younger generation believe the impossible, are forcing many of them to fall back in the direction of the determinist, with his rigid universe,—minus God, minus spirit, minus hope. Yet the vast majority of young people are equally unsatisfied with the contradictions which they meet in the determinist's dead world. They are groping in the dark, trying by themselves to find something solid on which to stand. Unfortunately few of them are able to work the problem out satisfactorily by themselves. Yet where a truly religious man or woman gets a hearing from them for a frank and reasonable explanation of great questions such as God, the Bible, miracles, prayer, they become as fine, honest, and self-sacrificing a type of Christians as the world has ever seen.

Let us say frankly then that we find law everywhere operative in our world to-day. Let us go one step further and say that law was equally operative in Bible days. Whatever happened then happened according to law. God does not break his own laws to play favorites or to answer anybody's prayers. "Christ was a dutiful son," as some one has well expressed it, "he never broke any of his Father's laws."

"Does this mean then," you ask, "that prayer does

not make any difference outside of what goes on in one's own head? Does it mean that none of the miracles ever happened? Did the priests simply make up these stories in order to fool the people?" I have frequently heard students say in discussing the subject that "Prayer is just kidding yourself along."

"Not so fast," I reply. "You have asked three questions at once. Let us take them one at a time. And the first shall be last, and the last first."

First then, were the stories in the Bible invented outright in order to fool the people? By no means. Let us remember that the Bible took a period of 1000 to 1200 years in the writing and editing, and that it contains legends covering several thousand years more. The writers were Orientals, full of the poetry and the mystery of the East. They were not limited by any theories of modern science as to what could or could not happen. All ancient literature is full of marvels,—witness the Greek gods in Homer, fighting with each other and with mortals on both sides of the Trojan war; witness the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris; witness the Babylonian flood tablets. To be honest, we must frankly admit that the early Hebrew stories belong to the same order of tales,—that they also consist largely of myth and tradition. The important difference between them and the stories told by the Greeks and the Babylonians and their value to us lies in their moral element. The stories of other nations were frankly immoral or non-moral. The stories as told by the Hebrews show the birth and infancy of a higher moral consciousness than their neighbors. Their point of emphasis and their beauty are marvelous, in contrast with the prevailing ideas of the times. They are on

the climb all the time, climbing up to the idea of one great God of all the Worlds,—instead of the many immoral gods of the nations around, who were worse than men. They prepare the way for the God of the Prophets, Jehovah who would send the Messiah to redeem his people,—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is not this patiently won victory of inestimable value to the world to-day?

When confronted with the story of Joshua and the sun standing still, all we can say is that the last compiler let it stand as it had been handed down by several centuries of tradition. Why did he decide to leave it in? He and his generation did not care whether or not the sun actually stood still. We cannot get past the sun standing still to what they wanted to say, but his thought paused upon it no longer than upon any other form of hyperbole. The thing that stood out prominently to Jews was that their nation still lived to prove that God had protected them and preserved them amidst all the hazards of ancient life. Their patriotism glorying in their God to the extent that they believed He had once even made the sun stand still for them, was really founded upon the historical fact that He had instilled into their fathers and their fathers' fathers the moral and spiritual stamina to persist, while other nations, seemingly stronger and greater than they, went down in ruin and ceased to exist.

The same attitude explains why the story of the falling down of the walls of Jericho was not removed from their history books. I remember a friend of mine who went to Tientsin just after the death of the Empress Dowager and the young Emperor in 1909. On his return to Shanghai, where I was living at the time,

I asked him how he found things at Tientsin. He replied, "After what I have seen at Tientsin, I wouldn't go across the street to see the walls of Jericho fall down." What he meant was this: The Great Wall which the Chinese people had built along their Northern border, and the walls of stone about their cities, were as nothing compared to the higher and more resisting walls of prejudice in their hearts against the foreign devils and all their works. A few of their scholars after a stay abroad then came back home with tales of the wonders of modern civilization. Their ancient prejudices, stronger and more enduring than the Great Wall, fell with a crash. Almost overnight they flocked to the foreign teachers to learn both their science and their religion.

Some of the stories in the Bible have grown up thus as myths and traditions and some are unquestionably allegories or parables. Are we then to say that none of the miracles ever happened? In order to answer this question, we must first ask ourselves another one. What is a miracle? A miracle is a strange thing, something to be wondered at, something not understood. Taken in this sense, we can say, "Why certainly, many miracles happen, *i.e.*, many strange things, many things that cause us wonder, many things not understood by us. But they happen according to and not contrary to law. . . ." What would be of the nature of a miracle to the people of two thousand or three thousand years ago, might not be a miracle to us at all. However, if we did not understand it, and it was altogether strange and wonderful to us, it would also be of the nature of a miracle to us.

If a man of the time of Moses or the time of Christ

should suddenly come into our midst, many things would be miracles to him,—the railway, the steamer, the wireless telephone, even so simple a thing as a match, which we buy for a penny a box. A picture recently appeared in the *National Geographic Magazine* of some natives of Central Africa falling down to worship when they saw their first aeroplane. When I was in Central China a crowd of boys followed me one day about town. In order to get rid of them I pretended to take a ten cash piece out of a tuft of grass. I thought they would stay behind and hunt for more money in the grass. Instead they followed me all the more. When I asked them why they did not hunt for pennies, they replied, "Oh, you can make pennies out of the grass. We can't do that. You can do anything." A miracle is something one does not understand that one finds altogether strange and wonderful.

For my part, I would say that it does not particularly matter to me whether any given miracle in the Bible, *i.e.*, strange happening, altogether wonderful and hard to impossibility to understand, occurred as an historical fact or not. As Martineau said, I do not know why I should care supremely for what God did not care enough ever to repeat. I am interested in the religious and moral teaching of the Bible, in the effect that those teachings had on the men and women of the Bible, and in what those beliefs and teachings can do for me and for the world to-day. I find there truly human men and women, marvelously depicted,—Abraham, Isaac and Rebekah, Joseph, Samuel, Saul, David, the Prophets, the New Testament characters,—and from their lives and sentiments I draw many a lesson for my life and for the life of our day.

Their work clearly shows that the Bible writers were sincere and honest men. They kept the stories as those stories were handed down to them, and they described scenes and happenings as they themselves understood them to have occurred. But the fact that they understood the curing of an insane man to be the casting out of a devil, does not make it necessary for me to believe in devil possession. Little though it may be that we have learned of insanity, many people are cured by treatment to-day who would have been hopeless cases and inhumanely neglected in former times. This advance would never have taken place had a dead literalism kept men tied down to the scientific and historical ideas of the year one.

"Then did any of the miracles happen?" you insist upon re-asking. I answer, Yes, if he never performed another miracle Jesus is a greater miracle himself than all the miracles ascribed to him, *i.e.*, stranger, altogether, more wonderful and impossible to understand. Denying the miracles or suspending judgment in regard to them has not destroyed our faith in his divinity. Let us now see all that accepting them could do for us. Let us admit that on one occasion he turned water into very good wine. What testimony for or against his competency to serve as our Master in religion can be gotten out of the act of this wonder worker in synthetic chemistry? Again, let us admit that on another occasion, with only sandals on his feet, he walked across a stretch of water as if it had been dry land. What testimony for or against his competency to serve as our Master in religion can be gotten out of the act of this playmate of the force of gravitation?

When we pass from nature to human nature miracles, the likelihood grows by leaps and bounds both that he did perform cures such as those attributed to him and that they do serve to emphasize his credentials as our Master in religion.

Some years ago I attended a series of clinics at the Ecole de Psychologie in Paris, which was attended also by many leading doctors of the city. Many types of disease were there treated by hypnotic suggestion, such as mal-de-mer, kleptomania, dipsomania, and other nervous disorders. I watched a young woman who had been dumb and had not spoken a word for eight years. She was in a serious nervous condition, bordering on insanity. I watched her treatment, which was given twice a week for six weeks. While under hypnotism she could sing and speak with perfect clearness, not loud at first on account of the long disuse of the vocal cords. Toward the end of the earlier treatments her voice gradually grew husky and as she came out of the hypnotic state finally disappeared, but this condition rapidly improved. At the end of six weeks she was cured. A new light had come into her face. When entirely out from under hypnotic influence she could talk as clearly as any average person. Was this a miracle or was it not? Equally startling results have been attained by Dr. Worcester of Emmanuel Church, Boston, and many others, simply by quiet suggestion, without putting the patient in a state of hypnosis. Cases are on record that bear a still closer resemblance to the miracles of healing recorded in the Bible. Other cases there recorded are quite beyond any modern analogue—such as the curing of lepers. As to them we must simply wait and see. Our religion does not

rest upon the outcome. But if I may venture an opinion, the scope of the power of mind is far greater than is yet suspected by most scientific men. One leading American physician of national reputation has gone so far as to say that the results in such cases depend on the power of personality, and that if any one had a personality ten times as strong as his there is no disease which could withstand it. May we not suppose that Jesus Christ had such a personality?

If a word or suggestion can cure a deaf and dumb girl, whether immediately by the action of Christ or Paul, or after repeated treatments under hypnotism by a Paris physician, who believes in neither Christ nor Paul, we have no way yet of knowing and can set no bounds to the results possible from the action of one personality on another.

We are therefore now in a position to consider the first (and last) of our three questions,—Is what prayer does done entirely by the mind of the one who prays or do factors outside take part in these results? In the language of the campus, is prayer just kidding yourself along? I have found that those students who thought in this rather negative way about prayer were not negative or agnostic in their practice, for they *generally* continued to pray because they got something out of it,—guidance, assurance, strength, something to help them live their daily lives.

Now let us stick to this: that however beyond our comprehension it may be, there is a connection between mind and matter. A thought is at once subjective and objective. The human will has accomplished all the great works of modern civilization. A thought can be wrought out in steel, or stone, or electrical energy. A

prayer is a thought, a will, or a desire, either spoken or unexpressed. Prayer has been considered too much as demanding things of God and then sitting down and waiting to see if he will do what we ask. Prayer is in reality rather communion with God, seeking to know his will and then using all our powers to accomplish that will.

When Samuel heard the divine voice he said, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." The trouble with most of our prayers is that we say, "Listen, Lord, for thy servant speaketh." If we will take up prayer as communion with God and seek the Divine guidance for the undertakings of every day of our lives, very few of us will ever have any doubt as to the reality of prayer.

Further, let us remember that the mind is not any *where*. Though it focuses through the brain, it is not in the brain. It belongs to the in-finite. We are the sons of God, a part of the Divine life. Other people's minds equally belong to that un-localized, infinite realm of Spirit. If we can put a thought into the mind of some one else that will exert an influence for good upon him, and we can, why hesitate to believe that God can put a thought into the mind of a man that will exert an influence upon him for good? What more do we need than an indefinitely extended application of this simple principle to account for an almost infinite range to the power of prayer? We have already in previous chapters discussed at length the various methods in use for the exchange of ideas—by speech, by writing, by pictures, and by direct thought-transference. Where, then, is any further difficulty about prayer located?

Prayer is so widespread a practice, so universal an

instinct, and so fundamental a factor of the life of the human soul as to constitute a strong presupposition that there is a reality outside us corresponding to this aspiration for communion. All our human senses have been developed in answer to stimuli. Sound waves rapped and rapped at our doors with their stimuli, and so we have developed ears to hear. Because there was light, we developed eyes to see. Perfumes and other odors gave us olfactory nerves to convey them to our consciousness. Is it possible that prayer is the one universal human sense possessed by us which is without a corresponding reality having acted as a stimulus to its creation? I think not, for Nature does not work that way.

Moreover, where its stimulus is removed, any sense soon atrophies and disappears. The fish in the Mammoth Cave have eye sockets, but they are blind. Mules that work too long in a mine without light lose their sight. Had all answering reality been lacking in these later centuries, would the prayer-sense not long ago have ceased to exist? Of course this does not prove the correctness of all primitive ideas about prayer. Men express and formulate many actual experiences inaccurately—for instance, ghosts and witchcraft—but by the nature of imagination it is impossible for us to conceive of anything, however bizarre, without starting from some reality.

Perhaps many supposed answers to prayer were suppositions only; others may have been mere coincidences. We seldom concretely know in single instances, even those of us who are perfectly sure "on principle," that no prayer ever goes unanswered. The great question of unanswered prayer, which troubles so

many people, arises largely from a mistaken idea as to the nature of prayer. This statement is not self-contradictory, nor does it sidestep the issue here. We know that food nourishes and sustains our bodies. Not so long ago men put food into their stomachs and never knew what happened to it, *i.e.*, knew nothing at all of the processes by which it came to nourish and sustain their bodies. But they kept right on eating. We have advanced a few poor steps in our knowledge about what happens to our food in our stomachs, but who can tell me which article of food and just when it was eaten out of which the brain cells were made that are giving their lives to enable me to get this thought to you?

So, also, is it with answers to prayer. The fact that prayer nourishes and sustains our souls is indisputable. Of the steps between our praying and our obtaining and spending that nourishment, *i.e.*, of what happens to our prayers after we project them, most of us know no more than men of old did as to what happened to the food that they put into their stomachs. Some men think that they have found out a few of the steps that occur between our praying and our obtaining the nourishment our soul requires, but which of them could tell me out of what particular moments of prayer I accumulated the stamina to resist the strains of this day's life?

Do not let your mind stumble over its own feet and make you believe that there is anything irrational about your continued practice of feeding body and soul under these circumstances. No one proposes to stop thinking because he knows little or nothing of all there is to be known about the nature of thinking and of how it turns out to be worth while. All protests that this is an irrational course, he would let go in one ear and out at the

other. Let him do the same with all protests that prayer is irrational, because the specific connecting chain between any particular request and boon in prayer is invisible and as a rule indiscoverable.

There is one other vexed question which people often ask. "If Christ was divine, why did he pray?" The very asking of the question shows a misconception of the meaning of either prayer or divinity. The divinity of Christ was the outcome of his perfect fellowship and communion with the Father. The essence of prayer is communion with God. Prayer was therefore to Jesus as the very breath of life. It was through his communion with the Father that he learned so perfectly the nature of God and so accurately reflected that nature to us. Through prayer he accumulated the reserves of power to overcome all temptation in his own life and to develop that marvelous personality which has been the wonder and admiration of humanity. It was to prayer that he turned in preparation for all the great crises of his life. Before choosing his disciples he spent the whole night in prayer. When the multitudes flocked about him, so that he had not leisure so much as even for eating, he went apart into a mountain to pray. Before the ordeal of the trial and crucifixion he spent that deeply-moving hour in the Garden of Gethsemane, and none can say, he least of all, that his prayer was not answered, for though the cup did not pass from him, such power was given to him to drink the cup with fortitude and grandeur that his crucifixion has become the central event in human history. If, therefore, prayer was so fundamental a part of the life of Christ, it cannot but be essential to the true life of all humanity.

CHAPTER 8

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

We have now considered the chief aspects of these living verities: the personal God as depicted in the personality of Jesus Christ; human personality, limited as separate individual existence and marred by sin, yet provided with marvelous capacities for advancement and powers of communication with other personalities and with the divine Person. The next question which naturally arises is, "What supremely are we to do with this equipment? What are we here for? What is the purpose of life?"

The true determinist has no answer for this question. The question is meaningless to him. For to him there is no God, no design, no choice, and there can be no such thing as purpose. We are caught in the toils of an inexorable causal nexus and cannot extricate ourselves. We just simply are and we cease to be, and that is the end o' the matter. But ordinary people know better than that,—we know that we ought to have a purpose in life.

A certain large body of scientists and would-be scientists, who have exalted Evolution into a quasi-deity but feel instinctively the shakiness of absolute determinism on its throne, would answer that we are here to fit ourselves to our environment. That is a good

starting point for an answer. Let us see where it leads us. Our environment is physical, social, mental, moral, and spiritual. It is an excellent thing for a man to be acclimatized, to fit into his surroundings and the life of his community, if those surroundings and that community life are high grade. But if he live next door to a malarial marsh, he soon finds it equally important that he fit his environment to himself and do away with breeding places for mosquitoes. If he live alongside of a social or moral morass, with degraded people for neighbors, it is even more important that he fit his environment to himself and undertake to cleanse the moral cesspool, in order particularly that the rising generation, his own children included, should not be corrupted. And he will find that he and those whom he is trying to help need spiritual power, that is religion, to accomplish their purpose.

At a large banquet some years ago, in connection with a religious convention, I found myself standing next to a judge of the United States Circuit Court who had been a college fraternity brother. He was called upon to say grace and did so, to my surprise. As we seated ourselves I said to him, "How is this, Ben? I did not know you went in for this sort of thing. You were not interested in the Y when you were in college." "There wasn't any Y," he replied, "when I was in college." "Oh, yes, there was," I answered. "Well," he said, "if there was, I didn't know it." "But," he continued, "after I left college, I got interested in trying to clean up our town—(it was one of the worst of its size in the country—rows and rows of saloons and dives, poor schools, a rotten government, discouraged-looking churches, and great numbers of

boys and girls going wrong,—I knew the place well by reputation)—but when I had tried it for a while, I found that I had to have some religion to keep it up." That town is growing into one of our model cities to-day.

If, therefore, we are to stick to the idea of the scientist that our purpose in life is to fit into our surroundings, we see that we cannot stop there but that it expands itself into a rather larger and loftier purpose. It is equally important to fit our environment to ourselves, perhaps more important, than to fit ourselves to our environment. And with the rapid shrinkage of the earth by modern means of communication, we find that the uttermost parts of the earth now belong to our environment. The answer to the question which the lawyer asked of Jesus that brought forth the story of the Good Samaritan, "Who is my neighbor?" has much more point to-day than when it was spoken.

There are scientists, however, who refuse to accept the full implications of this argument which we have just set forth. They limit it very narrowly by the uses to which they put their idea of the "survival of the fittest." The life purpose they get from this principle is the selfish one of climbing to the top of the heap, even though it be at the expense of the weakling and the underprivileged, who may be crushed beneath their feet. They have even been known to go so far as to deprecate and oppose "charity" and mission work, on the grounds that they help the unfit to survive and so impede the progress of the race. By and large I think we can say truthfully that any one who goes far with this doctrine of the survival of the fittest thereby shows himself unfit to survive. For it is the essence of self-

ishness and selfishness is the root of all evil. Such a doctrine leads logically to the Superman, "Kultur," wars of conquest, and the destruction of the unfit. The whole idea is in the end self-destroying.

What standard is to be used in separating the fit from the unfit? A man may be a physical giant but a mental dunce. A man may be an intellectual Napoleon but a moral leper. A man may be a spiritual power but a physical cripple. There are nations which have brought great gifts to mankind, but are weak to-day. Would we wipe them out? Would we leave them to their fate in the face of disaster at the hands of aggressive neighbors? There are peoples like the Russians that are backward in civilization; others that have stood still like the Chinese. Yet who knows what capacity for learning, what genius for art or music, what strength of moral fiber or fineness of spiritual insight may be hidden within the germ plasm of their national future? Further, we must take into consideration that among the highest attainments of humanity are the capacity for love and sympathy. In fitting ourselves to our environment,—and our environment to ourselves,—in becoming the fittest, lots of work must be be found for these highest qualities. Yet these very qualities are blunted and trampled upon by a ruthless doctrine of the survival of the fittest, while it is they again which are brought to the finest blush of ripe perfection by the exercise of unlimited philanthropy and good-will toward all men.

Probably the first answer that would come into the head of the average person,—particularly a young person,—to our question of the purpose of life would be, "Why, enjoy yourself,—have a good time." That is the

answer given also by many of the great philosophers, ancient and modern, only under another name. They call it a "Hedonistic philosophy," which in the language of the campus is simply "joy-riding through life." Doubtless you have noticed that one seldom goes joy-riding alone. The crowd goes together and the hilarity comes from interchanges between congenial spirits. A little thought will convince us that this answer travels in much the same direction as the answer of the scientist considered above.

Jesus said, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto life eternal. . . . I have meat to eat that ye know not of. . . . My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." The pursuit of joy is a worthy purpose in life, if one knows what kind of joy to pursue, but not the pursuit of the happiness of the hour.

The young man to whom we referred in our opening chapter put his answer to the question in a way that seems fairly satisfactory to people of the modern mind. He said, "If there is a God, and I have based my life on the belief that there is, then God must have a will for my life. A general cannot command an army without knowing what each soldier is to do. How can I know the will of God for my life? It seems to me that God will be satisfied with my life if I spend my life doing what God is doing. And what is God doing? He is perfecting his world by the spread of liberty, justice, and truth. God ought to be satisfied with my life if I spend it in helping to perfect his world, as he is doing, by the spread of liberty, justice, and truth."

Ay, that is a life purpose worthy of the best that is in us. There is something in that to inspire and fortify

us, and lead us up and on. To coöperate with God, to fit into his purpose, to join with him in perfecting his world! It embraces all that is best in all the other answers we have considered. Yet it is neither coldly logical nor indefinite. It is dynamic. The leadership of the infinite Personality, the enthusiasm of a common aim, the assurance of a great struggle, and the promise of final success are all involved in it. In accomplishing that purpose we not only must fit ourselves to the best in our environment, but we must fit our environment, as far as the ends of the earth and the completion of time, to the best that is in us. In the prosecution of such a task we can enjoy ourselves with a joy that satisfies. Neither are we then laboring for the meat which perisheth, but like Christ, our meat will be "to do the will of him that sent us and to finish his work." In such an undertaking we do "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Those who have great abilities and yet have attained to real success have attained it not by expending their energies on selfish ambition but by employing them for the common good. Think of the men whom we love to honor, either in history or in the life of to-day. We do not count the gilded youths among them of ancient Rome, or of London, Paris, and New York to-day. We think rather of Washington, who spent his wealth and his life in the service of his country; of Lincoln who would not let his country be divided; yes, and of Jesus of Nazareth, who had not where to lay his head.

The talk to-day is about values, and about expressing one's self. Much of it is twaddle. The true values of life result from hard work and are expressed in terms of character. Those who profess to want to "express

themselves" frequently mean that they want shamelessly to expose their worst instincts and appetites, to the contamination of their neighbors and their own self-destruction. The only avenue of true self-expression is the suppression of self. You will readily agree that in word and deed Jesus expressed the greatest personality that we know. He said, "I came not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me. . . . The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. . . . If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

We were right, therefore, in the conclusions reached in the second chapter, that sin is selfishness and that selfishness is sin. If we are to undertake as our central purpose in life to do what God is doing,—to help him perfect his world, our first task is with ourselves. Our first task is to develop a character of our own which will give us the ability to be of real service. Now here we have one of the most delicate adjustments required of us, and the one perhaps which is most often misunderstood and mismanaged. Even intelligent and high-minded people say that morality blends in the last analysis with enlightened self-interest. They maintain that when we do right or act kindly we do so because it brings us pleasure and satisfies us. Nevertheless, if we take that attitude we remain cold, hard, calculating, selfish. As long as self remains the center round which we rotate, it makes no difference how the orbit is described, the cankerworm remains eating away in the heart. We cannot develop the character that we are after for our own sakes as an end in itself. We must make the most of our lives and our opportunities

for the sake of efficient service in God's world. Then as a by-product we shall have added to us the ultimate value,—character.

The difference is a difference of attitude. Attitude belongs to the realm of the spiritual and man is a spiritual being. The real motive should be other-regarding love,—which is the spiritual dynamic of life. It counts not the cost. It asks no return. It does no sums in "what am I going to get out of it?" It is spontaneous, joyous, free, and it satisfies. "Love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth." (I Cor. 12, 4-8.)

Now that we have come to an agreement as to what our purpose in life should be, we are ready to deal with certain central and fundamental questions in religion:—What is conversion? What is salvation? What is the meaning of the cross? The typical evangelistic sermon even to-day conveys the impression that conversion is "just stepping over a line,"—an easy thing, soon done and never needing to be done over again; that by it we obtain salvation and forgiveness at the hands of an angry and jealous God, who had condemned us in the fall of Adam; that salvation means a state of future bliss in heaven and escape from eternal punishment in hell; and finally that the meaning of the cross was that Christ had paid the debt we owe in full and that like any other discharged debtor the account was closed and we are free.

Now all this, and I think it a fair statement, is medieval legalism. It is not Christianity. The spirit of Christ is missing entirely. It is selfishness. It is a promoter's scheme by which to put in little and take out much. By it we are to be freed of the just punishment of our own misdeeds (and those of our ancestors, unjustly held against us) and save our own miserable souls. The appeal is all to the motives of fear and greed. If this were the best that Christianity had to offer, I would have none of it. Where this is offered to them as Christianity, a large part of our enlightened young people steer clear of the church. In saying this, I do not consider myself heretical. The people who teach what we have just outlined are the ones who are heretical. They are not teaching at any rate what Christ himself taught. They have missed his spirit entirely.

Above all else, Christ was unselfish, and Christianity is the religion of unselfishness. Christ did not appeal to the motives of fear and greed. His motive was love, and love does not rotate about self and fear and greed. It was love that he instilled into the hearts of his followers. Conversion is the badly misused theological name for the process of changing the heart from selfish to unselfish. The agent is love: love to God with all our heart and love to our neighbor as ourselves. We love him because he first loved us and thus taught us how to love him. Our purpose must be to give rather than to get, to serve and not to be served. "For the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Plainly the meaning of the cross is that salvation could not have any selfish element in it. It cannot mean bestirring ourselves to save our own miserable souls from the wrath of God, and leaving the rest of humanity to their fate. Salvation means saving society, —that is, domesticating the Kingdom of God on earth, perfecting God's world, and as a by-product saving ourselves,—not from the wrath of God but from our selfishness, littleness, meanness. This is a clew, perhaps, to what Jesus means by the enigmatical remark, "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 10, 39), and again, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." The paradox centers in both cases in the double use of the word "life." The life that we are to lose is the life of love of self whose central thought is "I want," "I will"; the life that we will find in its place is the life of love of others, a larger, more vibrant personality, that says, "Not my will, but thine be done, O God." It is a self that knows no definite bounds to the interchanges between itself and the divine personality; a self that is one in will with God, one in love with humanity, one in purpose with the Father of us all. As Tennyson says,

> Our wills are ours we know not how,
> Our wills are ours to make them thine.

What, then, is the meaning of the cross? It has evidently something to do with this right about face in

which we put off the selfish self and put on the unselfish self; something to do with denying one's self, and having the new and larger self in harmony with the will of God take its place. The cross stands for a principle of "vicarious sacrifice,"—universal in application, formulated by Jesus in these words: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." This is what we mean, also, by our saying that the central purpose of our life is to do God's will and to coöperate with him in perfecting his world.

What, then, did Jesus accomplish by the crucifixion? He remained true to his principles and to the will of God. He suffered the natural consequences of his work of love for humanity. Being strong, he bore the infirmities of the weak. And by the splendor of his personality, when standing before the Roman tribunal, when spat upon and cursed, and crowned with thorns, when hanging in the agony of death upon the cross between two thieves, he will, soon or late, awake in our dull and selfish hearts a compelling love which will force us to deny ourselves and take up our crosses and follow him. It is in this sense that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of mankind—he showed us every one the all-embracing love of God, and thus awakened that ever-widening stream of love which will eventually domesticate the Kingdom of God on earth.

I can perhaps illustrate what I mean by the homely simile of a bowling alley. The ball does not strike each of the pins separately; it strikes only the first pin. That in turn strikes the next two. And they in turn bowl over the three beyond. Thus the ten strike is made and the board is swept clean. Yet in a sense

the ten strike was made when the ball left the bowler's hand with the proper impetus. So we may say that Christ is the Saviour of us all, in the sense that he gave the impetus which is going to bring the ultimate result; yet before humanity is finally saved, each one must receive that impetus and in turn pass it on to those that are beyond.

The cross is the sign and symbol of voluntary self-sacrifice. The cross is not to be taken separately from, but is a logical and necessary part of the life and death of Jesus. There was no trace of selfishness in Christ's offering of himself for his friends, and there should be no selfishness in our acceptance of that offering. For vicarious sacrifice is a common principle of all life. What Christ did for us we are to do for the brethren. He did infinitely more than any one of us can do, but God does not count the cost. Each one of us must give all,—himself, to the loving service of God and humanity. That all is all we have to give, and it is sufficient; for if Christ's followers have this spirit, his Kingdom will soon come upon earth. The unfulfilled task that still remains to be accomplished is a staggering one, but to those who have faith like in kind to Jesus Christ himself, and identical with that which is shown by his early followers, nothing is impossible. Though in a sense the work of clearing away the rubbish and laying the foundation was only just begun, yet the plans were drawn, the laborers were employed, and because he was convinced that all the necessary means had now been provided for completing the structure, he was able to say truly, as he hung in agony upon the cross, "It is finished."

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